

Shevardnadze may be persuaded to stay

Gorbachev in desperate hunt for way out

By BRUCE CLARK AND OUR FOREIGN STAFF

PRESIDENT Gorbachev was yesterday desperately searching for a constitution that would keep him in power and prevent the Soviet Union collapsing into chaos.

A draft resolution to patch together temporary agreements between the republics was circulated at the supreme legislature after five days of inconclusive debate on a new union treaty. The mayor of Leningrad said that without such an arrangement, "we will have to go to the military on our own and ask them to govern us".

The Congress of People's Deputies was also asked to approve sweeping changes to bolster Mr Gorbachev's power, amid speculation that Eduard Shevardnadze would continue to serve at his side in spite of his surprise resignation as foreign minister.

The two men held a long meeting yesterday, after which a close adviser to Mr Gorbachev predicted continued high office for Mr Shevardnadze. "The president is not the sort of person who would lightly part with such an ally," Georgy Shakhnazarov said.

Mr Gorbachev said that "having studied the world reaction to Shevardnadze's resignation, the president reacted to it with his usual equanimity".

The proposed new constitution, including a powerful vice-presidency for which Mr Gorbachev had Mr Shevardnadze in mind, envisages the creation of several new institutions. A federation council would represent the republics, a security council would oversee defence, and a new federal agency would tackle rising crime. A state inspectorate would ensure that presidential decrees were fulfilled.

The post of prime minister was unexpectedly retained, at the head of a new cabinet directly subordinate to the president. This leaves open the possibility that the much-criticised Nikolai Ryzhkov might keep his job, although there was speculation that the finance minister, Valentin Pavlov, would be promoted.

Putting the proposals forward, the parliamentary speaker, Anatoli Klyukanov, said the changes were aimed at bringing "well-being and peace to millions of people and restoring their faith in future". But a deputy from Kiev immediately protested, saying: "A coup d'état is taking place, a quiet, creeping, right-wing, reactionary coup d'état with Mikhail Gorbachev at its head, although he may not realize it."

Technically, some two-thirds of the 2,250 members of the congress must endorse any constitutional change but the president has already decided not to count absences, who include deputies from the Baltic and Armenian republics who are boycotting the session. The changes also rest on the elusive agreement on the new union treaty, laying down a reformed structure for the Soviet federation. That has now been left to drafting committees who must try to bridge differences between the Soviet leadership and the republics including the Russian federation.

Democrats yesterday rallied round to halt what Mr Shevardnadze described on Thursday as the threat of dictatorship, effectively appealing to Mr Gorbachev to join forces with Boris Yeltsin, the Russian president. The Inter-Regional Group of radical deputies called in a statement to the parliament for a renewed coalition of democratic forces to beat back

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Kremlin colonels, page 8
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Big costs bill for Sonia Sutcliffe in libel case

By ROBIN YOUNG

SONIA Sutcliffe, the wife of Peter Sutcliffe, the Yorkshire Ripper, yesterday lost her libel action against the *News of the World*. Costs awarded against her are expected to be as much as £300,000 and it is possible that Mrs Sutcliffe might be charged with alleged perjury.

During the 15-day trial George Carman QC, counsel for the *News of the World*, said that Mrs Sutcliffe had committed perjury during the hearing and at the trial last year of a libel action against the magazine *Private Eye* in which she was initially awarded damages of £600,000.

Libel verdict, page 3

Dividend blow

WPP Group, the debt-ridden advertising agency run by Martin Sorrell, has withdrawn its dividend payment of 13.7p a share to conserve cash. The shares, which peaked at 715p earlier this year, fell more than 20 per cent to 50p on the announcement. Page 29

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Mini Cooper, 1990 style

Most of the demand is coming from abroad where the Mini has become a cult car. It is the best-selling imported car in Japan, with more than 10,400 sold there this year, nearly 1,000 more than have been sold in Britain and accounting for more than a third of all export sales of Minis. Japanese enthusiasts were buying

and the car is commanding premium prices when the rest of the market is having to discount.

The enormous success of the Mini after more than three decades is baffling Rover executives, who were going to axe the model six years ago. But Sir Graham Day decided to keep the car running when he took over as chairman in 1986 because, he said, it was "a nice little earner". How much the Mini is earning has not been revealed by Rover, but export sales could be worth about £180 million, according to industry estimates.

Rover said: "Foreign markets love the Mini. In France, women love the car with special paint jobs as a chic runabout. That is why the Mini Cooper is so popular."

Sir Alec Issigonis reputedly

sketched the shape of the car on the back of a cigarette packet. He wanted to design a box on wheels, just 10 feet by four feet by four feet, with 80 per cent of the space given over to the passenger and luggage area, which meant turning the 948cc A-series engine sideways. The Mini was designed in six months and launched under the Austin and Morris badges in 1959, and became part of the Swinging Sixties, driven by stars such as Twiggy and Peter Sellers and starring alongside Michael Caine in *The Italian Job*.

Its original design is little changed, although its engine has been cleaned up to meet modern environmental emission laws. More than five million have now been built and the Mini sits alongside the Volkswagen Beetle and Citroen 2CV as one of the most readily identified cars in the world.



Not the January sales: Alyis Wallbank with coats donated for the homeless at Christmas

Jams as holiday getaway begins

By OUR AIR CORRESPONDENT

MILLIONS of families took to the road, sea and air yesterday afternoon as office workers left their desks early and the great Christmas revolution got under way.

Airlines put on additional flights to cope. Some passengers missed flights because the security checks - stepped up because of growing fears of a terrorist attack - were taking longer than normal, as passengers were asked to unwrap the legs of the rioters.

The battle, in the town of Chop on the Hungarian border, had lasted hours, and the soldiers attacked the arms stores, arsenal and guardhouse, Tass reported. Officers arriving at the scene were also attacked and guards fired into the legs of the rioters.

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Talks collapse leaves fate of Pan Am in the balance

By HARVEY ELLIOTT, AIR CORRESPONDENT

THE survival of Pan Am was last night hanging in the balance after the effective collapse of talks between British and American transport officials.

The Americans had pleaded with Whitehall to give an undertaking that United Airlines would be allowed to take over Pan Am's routes into and out of Heathrow, but were told that nothing could be decided until after full consultation on the future distribution of air traffic throughout the London region in mid-January.

Furious American officials said that the £203 million deal could not go ahead without such an undertaking and that as a result cash-starved Pan Am could be forced into bankruptcy with the blame being laid squarely at the door of what they regarded as "British hide-bound intransigence".

Now American officials are planning to contact President

Bush to ask him to raise the matter with John Major, the prime minister, during talks at Camp David and break what they regard as a bureaucratic log jam.

The British side, however, is adamant that nothing can happen until the CAA has completed its formal investigation into traffic distribution, reports to the Department of Transport, and Malcolm Rixford, the transport secretary, has in turn made his decision. The whole process, they argue, has already been speeded up as much as the law will allow. Until it is completed they cannot make any further progress on detailed negotiations.

Until then, they have told the American side, United Airlines will just have to wait and if Pan Am collapses in the meantime that is an American problem and nothing to do with Britain. Pan Am has been

leading an almost hand-to-mouth existence over the past few months and is rapidly reaching the point where it may have to consider applying for bankruptcy. Desperate attempts were going on last night to try to raise additional finance at least to tide the airline over until the British were able to guarantee that United Airlines would be

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Sunday shopping laws in disarray as traders plan big open day

By RAY CLANCY

THOUSANDS of shops are expected to open tomorrow in defiance of Sunday trading laws and attempts by local authorities to stop them. Council enforcement officers will, however, be gathering evidence of illegal trading across the country and have said they will prosecute offenders.

BHS, the high street chain store, plans to open 100 of its 138 stores. The company placed full-page advertisements in national newspapers listing branches that will open and offering free fruit punch for late Christmas shoppers.

Woolworth, which along with

BHS and other stores, gave an undertaking to various councils in the High Court earlier this week not to open this Sunday, said it was reviewing the situation in areas where the ban does not apply.

Dixons, the electrical equipment chain, also advertised that selected stores would be open, and said it hoped to open more stores than last Sunday.

Other stores such as John Lewis, House of Fraser, Selfridges in London, Marks & Spencer and C&A are firmly opposed to Sunday trading and will not be opening. The Oxford Street Association, which represents stores in London's busiest

shopping area, said its policy is against Sunday opening but it admitted that some of its members would be trading.

Thousands of small retailers are expected to open for business on Sunday. Some said Christmas shoppers are spending less money this year and every available hour of trading was needed.

Many councils have sent warning letters to stores which have opened on Sundays and four injunctions were obtained in the High Court on Thursday preventing shops from opening their doors. In Birmingham some large stores have said they will not open in spite of a newspaper poll that showed 68 per cent of

shoppers in the city were in favour of Sunday opening. Of the 400 questioned for *The Birmingham Post* survey, 72 per cent said the city council should not prosecute offenders.

In Chester shopkeepers from the chamber of trade, who have voted to stay shut on Sunday, are planning to test the law by stealing from shops which open to establish whether it is illegal to take something from a store which is itself breaking the law by trading. Police said the scheme was ill-advised.

In Manchester, the Arndale centre will stay shut tomorrow, but BHS, H Samuel the jewellers, and Currys the electrical equip-

ment store said they planned to open. Blackpool council said it would apply for injunctions to prevent stores opening if they insisted on trading on Sundays and it has sought written undertakings from those who opened last week not to do so again.

Some councils believe individual traders should be held responsible for breaching the shops act. Leeds council said action would be taken against traders who "flagrantly advertised" their intention to break the law and it intended to hold individuals responsible.

Meanwhile the two sides involved in the Sunday trading debate could meet in the new year

to discuss a compromise which would lead to a change in the law. The Keep Sunday Special Campaign has written to the prime minister urging him to make a public statement to encourage councils and retailers to uphold the law. Michael Schmitz, the campaign director, said: "We are ready and willing for talks with the government for as long as it takes to produce a solution which is in the best long term interests of everybody."

The rival Shopping Hours Reform Council plans to contact the Home Office to try to get the two sides together. Andrew Curry, head of research, said: "The first step is that people talk

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BBC asked to explain man of year decision

By JAMIE DETHMERS AND CHRISTOPHER THOMAS

THE BBC came under pressure yesterday from politicians and British Hindus to explain more fully its reasons for depriving the Indian political leader Lal Krishan Advani of the Radio 4 Man of the Year award.

While some Indian community leaders in Britain accused the BBC of racial discrimination, hardline Hindus in Delhi said they would be deeply upset if Mr Advani were denied the accolade.

Mr Advani, leader of the chauvinist Hindu Bharatiya Janata Party, yesterday rejected the suggestion that his British supporters could have orchestrated listeners' votes in this year's competition, the reason the BBC gave for denying him the award. He said he had no idea what had happened. "If this vote was orchestrated, then by whom?" he asked.

As *The Times* disclosed yesterday, Mr Advani received the majority of votes from listeners in this year's competition, which was organised by the *Today* current affairs programme.

Senior editors on the programme took the decision to discount all the votes for Mr Advani after they began to suspect that they were the result of an orchestrated campaign. A significant number of votes had been enclosed in envelopes of the same type and make and posted in Bradford and Birmingham.

A BBC spokeswoman yesterday said that she was dismayed at the reaction to the editors' decision. "The competition is just supposed to be a bit of end-of-year fun for our listeners. An orchestrated voting campaign is not in that spirit."

Leading article, page 9

Welsh Ford plant's award

The Ford motor company has decided to make its top award for excellence and quality to one of its British plants which, according to union officials, was "punished" earlier this year by the cancellation of a £225 million investment plan which would have made Britain its key European production centre (Tim Jones writes).

Instead of putting the money into its plant at Bridgend, South Wales, the company decided to divert the investment to Germany. The move, announced in April, was acknowledged to be a rap over the knuckles for strikes earlier in the year which cost the company £10 million a day.

Bridgend is the first of the company's four engine plants in Europe to be selected to receive the award.

QC for enquiry

Hugh Carlisle, QC, was yesterday appointed to investigate whether West Midlands police deliberately suppressed an internal report on the accidental fatal shooting by police of 16-year-old Gail Kinchin ten years ago. Mr Justice Hodgson called for the enquiry at the High Court in Birmingham three weeks ago when he said it was deplorable that the report into the shooting during a siege had remained secret since 1980.

Inmates go home

Almost a quarter of Northern Ireland's prison population left prison yesterday for one week's Christmas leave. Among the 430 long-term prisoners going home were 144 serving life sentences. Christmas leave dates from before the outbreak of the present troubles just over 20 years ago and was a pioneering scheme in the British penal system. Those on leave include members of the loyalist murder gang of the 1970s known as the Shankill butchers.

Taylor challenge

Tory rebels yesterday claimed to have raised 30 signatures needed to challenge the adoption of the black barrister John Taylor as Cheltenham's prospective parliamentary candidate. Under party rules the names of 50 members are required to convene a special general meeting. The rebels' leader, Bob Williams, said: "We are not objecting to a black candidate being selected but we feel that we were railroaded into accepting him."

Drink-drive warnings are being heeded, police say

By NICHOLAS WATT

THE government's Christmas warnings not to drink and drive are being heeded and fewer people have been breathalysed positively in the last few weeks than in the same period last year, police forces said yesterday.

Supt Bill McDavid, head of the traffic department at Dumfries and Galloway police, said that while more people were found to be over the limit, there had been a decrease in real terms because the force had been testing more motorists. In the first three weeks of its campaign this year there was a 41 per cent increase in the number of drivers tested positively compared with last year, but the force had increased its tests by 80 per cent.

Mr McDavid said that the increased number of tests was partly due to the growing success of the force's drink-driver disclosure scheme which was launched in 1988. Dumfries and Galloway is the only Scottish force to run such a scheme whereby if somebody suspects another of drinking and driving they can telephone the police anonymously.

The force has increased its patrols and tests drivers first thing in the morning, when they might still have alcohol in their blood from the previous night, after lunchtime parties, and in the evening. Anyone involved in an accident has to take a breath test.

In Wiltshire, police have been breathalysing everyone involved in accidents and all drivers who commit moving traffic offences, such as speeding, passing through a red light or driving without lights. The force said that it wanted to create a deterrent as people were more careful about drinking and driving if they knew that there was a good chance of being caught. The force was paying more attention to drivers in the morning who were often startled to be tested positively at that time and did not know that the body lost only one unit of alcohol per hour after drinking.

There has been an appreciable reduction in real terms in the number of people that have failed the breath test in Wiltshire this year compared with last year. Sergeant Hunt, the force's accident prevention officer, said: Twenty people failed the test last year in the first five days of the campaign, and 32 failed in the same period this year. However, with the increased number of breath tests these figures were 8.5 per cent last year and 6.3 per cent this year. He said the decline was due to people becoming more concerned about the anti-social nature of drink-driving.

The West Midlands force has also been breathalysing all drivers involved in accidents and those who commit moving traffic offences. In the first two days of the test period up to yesterday morning 39 drivers had failed the test, compared with 29 in the same period last year. There have, however, been twice as many tests this year. Warwickshire police

has also been breathalysing all drivers in accidents but it has left it up to individual officers to decide whether to test drivers committing moving traffic offences.

In contrast, North Wales police says that it has not been running a Christmas campaign against drink-driving as it has been vigilant all year. The force would, however, be collecting figures from December 19 to January 2 in line with Association of Chief Police Officers guidelines.

The Metropolitan Police has been increasing the activities of its regular patrols. The force said that it breathalysed everyone involved in accidents, but when drivers broke traffic regulations officers would test them for alcohol only if they suspected that the driver had been drinking.

It was too early to compare this year with last year but the force said that of 5,496 tests made 423 drivers had failed or refused to take the test.



Beware dangers in low-alcohol myths

ANYONE contemplating drinking and driving this Christmas should watch out for the myths about the amount of alcohol in drinks and about how much their body can withstand (Nicholas Watt writes).

Some beers marketed for their low levels of alcohol contain above average volumes, according to Dr John Rae, former headmaster of Westminster School and director of the Portman Group, which promotes sensible drinking.

He said that Miller Lite had a volume of 4.1 per cent which was more than four times as much as the Carlton low-alcohol brand. Miller Lite's volume was also a percentage point above the average beer strength of 3 per cent.

However, Dr Rae did not accept Tesco's new policy of

printing the amount of alcohol units per glass on its own brands of drinks. He said there was a great deal of ignorance about units and he called on the drinks industry, which funds the Portman Group, to mark the levels of alcohol in grammes on bottles and cans.

However, Simon Sandberg, alcohol research officer for the Health Education Authority, welcomed the Tesco initiative as a model for other stores. An average lager such as Heineken, contained 1.5 units in a 440ml can, while the same-size Carlsberg Special had four units.

A recent survey for the authority found that while most people knew about alcohol units few had any idea of how many units were contained in particular drinks.

However, drinkers can gain solace from an analytical chemist specialising in drink driving who has disputed claims that low-alcohol drinks can take drivers over the limit. Ronald Denney, of London's Thames Polytechnic, said that people drinking low alcohol beers at normal rates would produce virtually no build-up of blood alcohol.

"It is not possible for a person to exceed the legal limit from drinking low-alcohol beers alone. Even after a full strength alcoholic drink, the increase in blood alcohol will be so insignificant as to be irrelevant," he said.

The health department said last night it had never heard of such findings.



Rae: "Great ignorance about alcohol units"

Post haste: Sir Bryan Nicholson, chairman of the Post Office, surrounded yesterday by the mass of Christmas mail still to be delivered. He said that a record number had been sent this year despite signs of recession (William Cassi writes).

"Posting Christmas cards seems to be the one area the public has not cut back on. By Christmas Eve we will have handled 1.5 billion items of festive mail in 24 days, beating last year's record by 40 million items," he said during a visit to the Mount Pleasant sorting office in central London.

The avalanche of cards reached a record peak on Monday, when 119 million cards were posted. That is more than double the number handled on a normal day and beats last year's record of 115 million. The mail has been swollen by expensive cards in place of presents and by the demand for electricity shares.

He said that the Christmas operation this year had run smoothly, and praised postmen and women who had worked through the worst weather for ten years. The cascade of mail included a new record-sized sack of 750,000 cards addressed to Santa Claus in Reindeerland, better known as a Royal Mail office in Edinburgh.

One letter this year has started a national appeal. A small girl, Gemma, sent Santa a present of a hallmark silver ring in a unframed standard envelope, with no home address, marked: "Father Christmas, North Pole, or wherever you are".

Sir Bryan has had the ring valued, and yesterday launched an appeal to find Gemma. "We are concerned that the gift may be someone's treasured wedding ring — we are appealing for anyone who may know Gemma to come forward." Anyone who thinks they do is asked to call 031-556 8661 with her surname.

Part of the explanation for the changed plan is the scathing criticism Armley jail received last month in a report by the Prisons Inspectorate. It urged the Home Office to bar young people from

Suicide fears speed up removal of young prisoners from jail

By QUENTIN COWDRY, HOME AFFAIRS CORRESPONDENT

THE government has speeded up plans to remove young unconvicted prisoners from the adult jails of Hull and Armley, Leeds, where eight inmates aged under 21 have committed suicide since 1980, it was disclosed yesterday.

Under its original scheme, which involved the conversion of Thorp Arch prison near Wakefield, West Yorkshire, into a young offenders' institution, Hull and Armley would continue to have held young remand inmates for the next two years.

Faced by fierce new criticism of jail conditions, the Home Office has now decided to use the newly-built Moordown jail in Doncaster, South Yorkshire, as the main holding centre for young people remanded by courts in Yorkshire and Humberside. The Home Office said yesterday that it hoped Moordown would begin taking prisoners in August.

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armed and masked men and was being held hostage while the milkman drove the vehicle, with a suspect package aboard, to the checkpoint in the latest "human bomb" attack. British and Irish security forces had the area around Kilkerran sealed off on both sides of the border last night while an army bomb disposal team stood by.

Michael Magee, aged 26, of Antrim, Henry McNally, aged 46, and John O'Hagan, aged 37, of Dungannon, and Peter Battson, aged 35, of Magherafelt, were found guilty of possessing a 93lb Semtex bomb and of conspiracy to murder. They will be sentenced next month.

The bomb was found in the culvert of a road leading on to an estate in Antrim where soldiers and their families live in defence ministry married quarters. The court was told that it was intended the bomb should be detonated by a radio command on a day when a bus carrying soldiers was to use the road. Lord Justice Murray said that had that occurred, there was no doubt that all those aboard would have been killed or seriously injured. He was satisfied that the four were participating members of the bombing team.

In Co Fermanagh meanwhile a milk float thought to contain a bomb continued to block a permanent cross-border vehicle checkpoint at Kilkerran yesterday. The vehicle was left there on Thursday morning by a milkman whose helper had been abducted by

armed and masked men and was being held hostage while the milkman drove the vehicle, with a suspect package aboard, to the checkpoint in the latest "human bomb" attack. British and Irish security forces had the area around Kilkerran sealed off on both sides of the border last night while an army bomb disposal team stood by.

Appeal court judges, meeting in

Antwerp jail where the three are held in solitary confinement, accepted that there were delays in

allowing the men to see documents in the case but decided that the matter was being rectified and there was no need to release them.

Paul Quirynen, the men's lawyer, said that he would now appeal to

the Supreme Court in Brussels.

Inmates go home

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Journalist hails verdict in Sutcliffe's 'one court action too many'

Ripper's wife loses libel case and faces costs of £300,000

By ROBIN YOUNG

SONIA Sutcliffe, wife of the Yorkshire Ripper, yesterday lost her claim for libel damages against the *News of the World* and with it probably all the money she got in a series of breach of copyright and libel actions brought against newspapers and magazines in recent years.

The costs awarded against Mrs Sutcliffe in the 15-day hearing which ended yesterday with a unanimous verdict against her are expected to total £300,000. Mrs Sutcliffe had previously won a total of £334,000 damages, but during the trial her solicitor, Eileen Pembroke, told the court that only about £230,000 remained after meeting previous legal costs.

George Carman, QC, for the *News of the World*, sought and obtained from Mr Justice Drake an order that £150,000 of the money should not be moved from accounts with the Newcastle Building Society and the National Westminster Bank without seven days notice to the paper's solicitors. Mr Carman said the newspaper was concerned lest the money should be dissipated or moved abroad.

During the trial Mr Carman had claimed that Mrs Sutcliffe had committed perjury during her previous libel action against the magazine *Private Eye*, in which she was initially awarded £600,000 damages last year, later reduced to £60,000 by the Court of Appeal.

Paul Halloran, a spokesman for *Private Eye*, said last night that the magazine now intended to pursue the "criminal aspects" of the case with the Director of Public Prosecutions and would con-



Miss Jones: "Mrs Sutcliffe has been totally defeated"

sider a civil action against Mrs Sutcliffe, trying to recover costs.

Mrs Sutcliffe, a former school teacher, showed no emotion as the jury of nine women and three men returned its verdict. She had brought the action over a front-page report headlined: "Sonia loves a Ripper double". The article claimed that Mrs Sutcliffe had a "passionate affair" and "sexy fling" with George Papoutsis, a Greek company director.

Mr Papoutsis was described as "the spitting image" of Mrs Sutcliffe's husband, Peter, who was convicted of the murders of 13 women and sentenced to life imprisonment in 1981. The article quoted Mr Papoutsis as saying: "I feel sick. I've been kissing and caressing the wife of a monster."

Mrs Sutcliffe had claimed that the article libelled her by alleging that she deceived Mr Papoutsis by not telling him who her husband was, and by suggesting that she stole money by leaving him to pay two hotel bills in Greece on her behalf. The jury was out for six hours before returning

the verdict. Mrs Sutcliffe, who had been rocking tensely in her seat while waiting for the jurors to return, stared straight ahead as the verdict was delivered. Beside her, her mother, Maria Szurma, who had given evidence in the trial, looked grim.

Representatives of the *News of the World* on the other side of the court room were elated and smiling. They had bought Mrs Sutcliffe a one-way train ticket to Bradford, the value of which, Mr Carman had suggested to the jury, was the highest amount of damages she might deserve. In the event none of them was able to reach Mrs Sutcliffe before she left the court room and strode down a corridor to a private consulting room.

Mrs Sutcliffe later emerged with her solicitor, walking quickly and dismissing reporters' attempts to question her with flick of her hand.

Tom Crone, the *News of the World's* legal manager, said afterwards: "The jury's verdict is a great victory, not only for the *News of the World* but also for fairness and common sense." He said that the paper had paid £50,000 into court in offer of settlement of Mrs Sutcliffe's complaint. He described her refusal to accept that sum as plain greed.

Barbara Jones, chief reporter of *The Mail on Sunday*, who had been named as a third party in the action by the *News of the World*, smiled with relief and shook the hand of a friend sitting next to her on the front bench immediately beneath the jury box.

Mrs Sutcliffe had been in the witness box for six days during the trial. She had denied having an affair with Mr Papoutsis during a trip she made to Greece in May 1988 in company with Miss Jones.

The jury had heard that the *News of the World* had paid an agency called Rex Features £25,000 for its report of the holiday romance and an interview with Mr Papoutsis; £23,500 was paid by Rex Features to Barbara Jones, who said that she paid £10,000 to Mr Papoutsis and took the rest on behalf of a freelance photographer, Ian Parry, since killed in an air crash.

Barbara Jones, who represented herself in the trial, said of Mrs Sutcliffe afterwards: "She has been totally defeated. I think this was just one libel action too many for her."

During the trial, Mr Carman claimed that Mrs Sutcliffe had committed perjury during the trial and in her 1989 libel action against *Private Eye*. He described as "perjury loud and clear" an answer in the *Private Eye* trial in which Mrs

Sutcliffe had said that an agreement for the loan of money she needed to save her family house was not recorded in writing but only by word of mouth.

Mrs Sutcliffe had claimed

that the money was a personal loan from a friend whom she refused to name. In fact the money had been advanced by Miss Jones, who said that it was payment for Mrs Sutcliffe's co-operation in writing a book.

Receipts for £15,000 and £10,000 signed by Mrs Szurma and Mrs Sutcliffe respectively had been produced by Miss Jones. Mr Carman said they only came to light by "purest chance" because the *News of the World* had joined Miss Jones as a party to the action after discovering that she had been paid by Rex Features.

Mrs Sutcliffe claimed during the *News of the World* trial that she never knew of the receipt signed by her mother



Mrs Sutcliffe, who told the trial she was "an emotional crippler" and denied having felt any romantic attraction for George Papoutsis, a Greek company director

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Mrs Sutcliffe, describing herself as "an emotional crippler" denied having felt any romantic attraction for Mr Papoutsis. She said she had been "mortified" to read the article and concerned that it would upset her husband, whom she still visits in Broadmoor.

On Mrs Sutcliffe's behalf

her counsel, Geoffrey Shaw, argued that a written receipt was not the same as a recorded agreement. He described Mrs Sutcliffe's reply in the *Private Eye* trial as "truthful, not frank", and claimed that Mrs Sutcliffe had only been seeking to protect Miss Jones.

Mrs Sutcliffe, describing herself as "an emotional crippler" denied having felt any romantic attraction for Mr Papoutsis. She said she had been "mortified" to read the article and concerned that it would upset her husband, whom she still visits in Broadmoor.

Mr Papoutsis did not appear in court during the trial, though he too had been cited by the *News of the World* as a third party in the action. In a written statement read to the court he claimed he and Mrs Sutcliffe had been immediately attracted to each other, and had enjoyed "an obviously intimate relationship".

By MICHAEL McCARTHY, ENVIRONMENT CORRESPONDENT
THE weakness of the legal protection for Britain's most valuable wildlife sites was exposed yesterday when a challenge in the High Court failed to stop building development on a Dorset heathland that is home to some of the country's rarest animals and birds.

The World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) and the British Herpetological Society failed to block Poole borough council's plan to build up to 200 houses on Canford Heath. The land is home to sand lizards and smooth snakes, Britain's rarest reptiles, and to nightjars and Dartford warblers, which are among Britain's rarest breeding birds.

The heath is designated a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) by the Nature Conservancy Council under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. However, as yesterday's decision made clear, although SSSI designation is meant to be the principal legal tool for protecting important habitats, it is overridden by the planning process, and will not prevent development if a planning authority gives permission no matter how important the land is to local wildlife.

Mr Justice Schiemann, declining to quash the planning permission granted by Poole council, said that the council had grappled with the rival demands of conservation issues and the pressing need for housing in the area, and the balance it had struck was lawful. A council spokesman said afterwards: "The decision means we can press ahead with plans to build the houses."

Environmental groups saw the ruling as a dismal precedent and symbolic of the struggle between development and conservation in southern England. The Poole-Bournemouth area is one of the fastest-growing conurbations in Europe, and the lowland heath, with its rare flora and fauna, is one of the most fragile and endangered habitats in the country. The Dorset heathland has shrunk dramatically, and in the last 200 years more than 80 per cent of the original area has been lost; there are now just over 800 acres left, compared with 1052 in 1978.

Yesterday the WWF and the Royal Society for Nature Conservation called for changes in the law to give wildlife sites real protection, while the conservancy council said it would suggest adding to the SSSI.

THE SUNDAY TIMES

The best possible taste?

"The group photo call did not disappoint. As the host of the Miss Elegant People awards called Latoya Jackson to perch on his knee in the foreground, frost began to form over the magnificent shoulders of Gina Lollobrigida at this blatant upstaging. With consummate skill, she seized a Jackson forearm and leaned forward to engage her in mock conversation. Nothing personal, her smile said. It was just business."

Stuart Wavell, at a stylish Paris event, in *The Sunday Times* tomorrow.

All fall down

"If it's a funny old world for Mrs Thatcher, it's been a funny old year for the rest of us. Spectacular falls went hand in hand with fantastic folly."

In a special issue tomorrow, the *Magazine* looks at the year's losers and those who made us smile.

The earlier awards

MRS Sutcliffe has obtained £334,000 damages from the *Daily Express* in the press in actions for libel and breach of copyright, the court had been told. The money had averaged £50,000 a year tax-free, "far in excess of the average industrial wage let alone what a Bradford schoolteacher is paid", Mr Carman said. The awards were: £5,000 from the *Bradford Telegraph and Argus* in June 1983; £25,000 from the *Yorkshire Post* in November 1988; another £7,500 from the same paper the following May; £100,000 and £60,000 from *Private Eye* in October 1989; £35,000 from the *Daily Star* in November and

Academics remember Oakeshott

POLITICIANS and academics yesterday paid tribute to Michael Oakeshott, the leading conservative philosopher of the century, who died on Tuesday, a week after his 89th birthday (John O'Leary writes).

Although he shunned party politics, his writings over more than 40 years formed the philosophical basis for much of the "new conservatism". Academics of all political persuasions acknowledge his greatness.

Professor Kenneth Minogue, an Oakeshott appointee at the London School of Economics, said: "He was undoubtedly the most intellectual conservative philosopher who has ever existed, and much the most philosophical exponent of conservatism since Burke."

Throughout a career that also took in Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge, and Nuffield College, Oxford, he insisted that he owed allegiance to no party and had no message to convey. He was, however, a strong advocate of personal responsibility and freedom.

Lord Balfour said: "He has been very influential, in a sense an unrecognised influence. It was not the same contribution as Hayek, for example, because he was not so concerned with what should be done, more with the way people behave. There is no Oakeshottian doctrine but an Oakeshottian way of doing things."

"Many people think it quite extraordinary that he received no public recognition for his tremendous contribution to intellectual life."

While his health had weakened of late, his last book, *The Voice of Liberal Learning*, was published only last year.

Leading article, page 9
Obituary, page 10

Boy is awarded £1.198m over hospital blunder

A BOY of eight who suffered severe brain damage at birth because of a hospital blunder won record damages of £1,198,110 in the High Court in London yesterday.

Hugo Cassel, of Kirby Underdale, Humberside, suffered brain damage as a result of lack of oxygen at birth at the West London Hospital, in September 1982. He was born by forceps delivery and no heart beat was detected for more than a minute. Twelve hours later he suffered a convulsion.

The court had been told that Hugo, who had his name down for Eton and was destined for a successful life, will always be locked in the world of a child and will be totally dependent on others.

Mr Justice Rose said most

of the burden of caring for Hugo had fallen on his parents, Jeremy Cassel and his wife Vivien.

The boy's "marvellously devoted" mother had been "totally unstinting in her time and patience" over the last six years when her life had been dominated day and night by her son, the judge said.

The boy's parents were "determined that he will remain integrated into the family as much as possible" and he lives at home and goes to a special school from 8.30am to 3.30pm. He was hyperactive and behaved like a child aged two, the judge added.

He said that at night the boy jumped up and down on his bed, threw his toys around the room and "wanders up and down stairs throughout the night". Hugo would probably never progress beyond the mental age of four or five years.

"He will never live independently, marry or work," the judge said. His speech and sight were gravely impaired and he had a serious language problem.

He said Hugo had been born into a caring, close-knit, happy family, who were "well-to-do financially". The family had a great legal background: an uncle, grandfather and great-grandfather all became QC's.

The judge said that the boy would have been soundly educated and would have made his way successfully.

The judge allowed part of the award for a "suitably modest" private swimming pool to be built for Hugo, "not merely for therapy, but because swimming is his principal form of relaxation and pleasure, and it is one thing he can do himself".

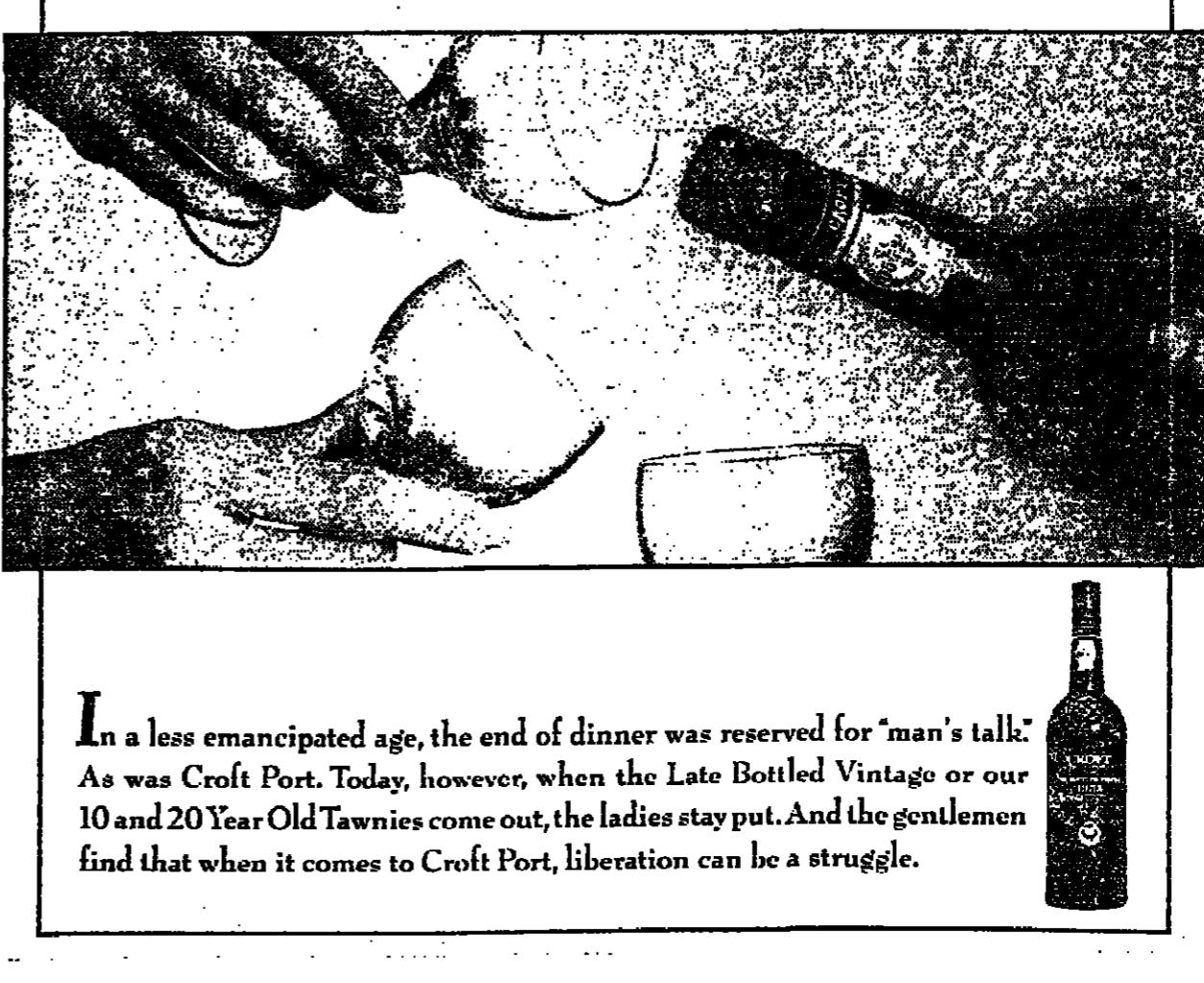
The damages and costs of the court hearing are to be paid by the Riverside Health Authority, which admitted that it was 90 per cent to blame.

The previous record award for medical negligence was £1,156,348 in April this year to Nicholas Almond, aged 10, who also suffered brain damage at birth.

Leading article, page 9
Obituary, page 10

Men used to ask the ladies to leave when Croft Port appeared.

Today they wouldn't have the bottle.



In a less emancipated age, the end of dinner was reserved for "man's talk." As was Croft Port. Today, however, when the Late Bottled Vintage or our 10 and 20 Year Old Tawnies come out, the ladies stay put. And the gentlemen find that when it comes to Croft Port, liberation can be a struggle.

Ending of student architect grants illegal, court rules

By JOHN O'LEARY, HIGHER EDUCATION CORRESPONDENT

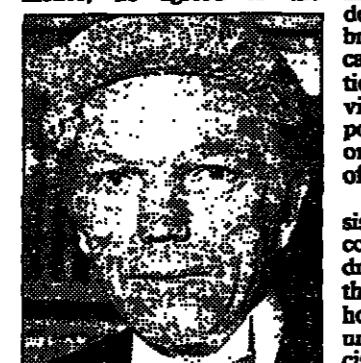
A GOVERNMENT decision to withdraw grants from student architects in the last two years of their course was declared illegal yesterday in the High Court. Costs were awarded against the education department.

Last August, John MacGregor, then education secretary, withdrew grants from students on the second part of university, polytechnic and college courses in architecture on legal advice. Although the grants had been paid since 1962, the department's lawyers considered that the award of a bachelor's degree after three years put subsequent study outside mandatory awards.

The judge said: "The secretary of state carried out his evaluation, if indeed he did ever carry out an evaluation, under a mistaken view of the law." The interpretation used for 28 years, that the two parts of a course in architecture counted as a first degree, had been the correct one.

He said that his decision was "at first blush slightly surprising", and he was making no comment on whether the courses should continue to attract grants. It is open to Kenneth Clarke, as education secretary, to decide which courses should be designated.

For administrative convenience, he agreed to the



Mr Justice Schiemann: "surprising decision"

department's request not to quash the order but simply to declare it unlawful. A spokesman for the department said later that ministers would study the judgment before deciding what action to take.

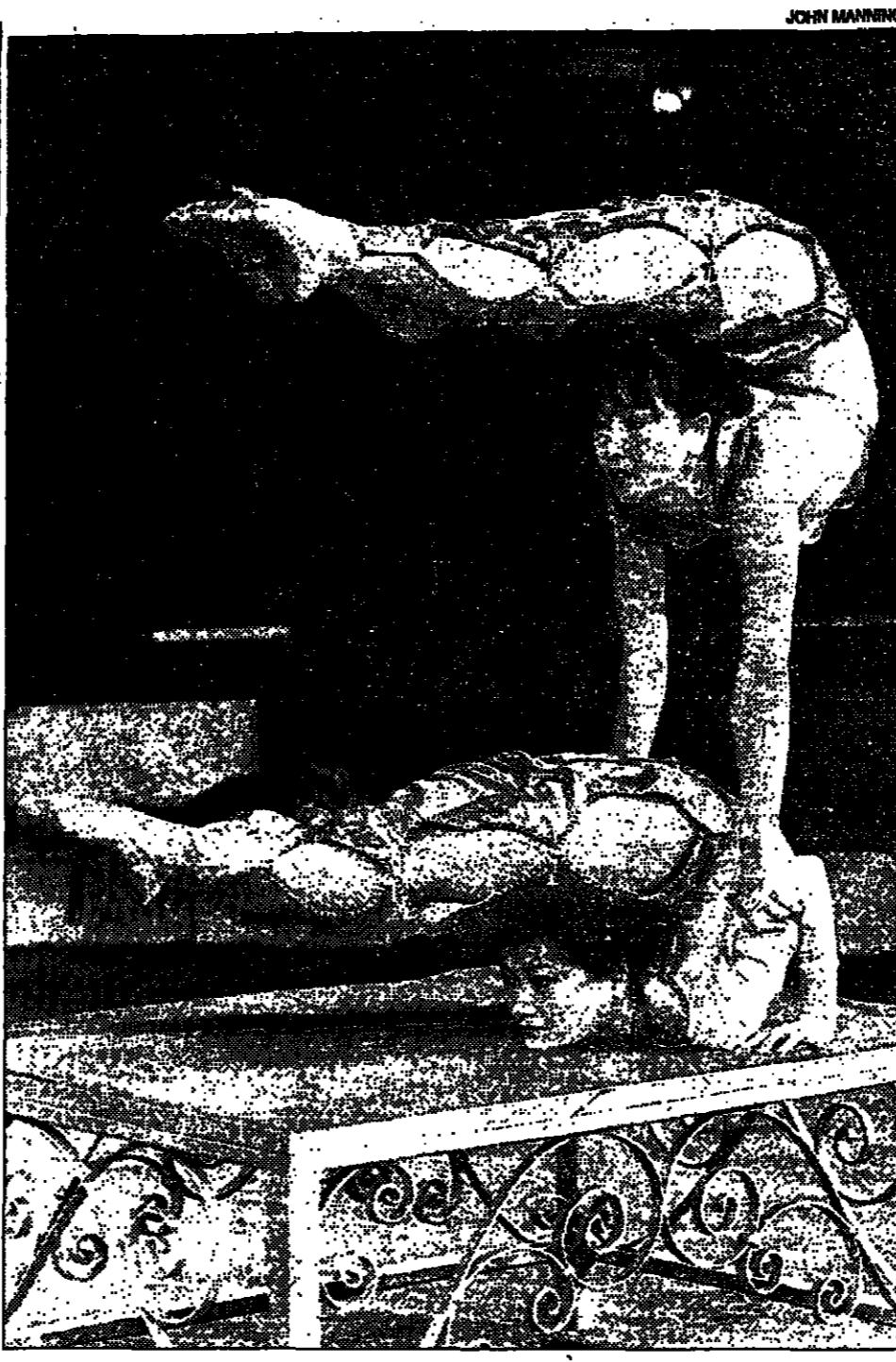
Bill Rodgers, director general of RIBA, said: "This has been a famous victory. I am sure the secretary of state has to accept it and restore the grants as quickly as possible."

Maxwell Hutchinson, the institute's president, said: "This judgment exposes government's proposals for changes in architectural education as the shoddy cost-cutting exercises they are."

The education department is conducting a review of courses in architecture with a view to reducing public funding to four years.

In his judgment, Mr Justice Schiemann compared courses in architecture to medical degrees at Oxford and Cambridge, both of which also carry intermediate qualifications. The departmental review has been seen as a potential test for a later assault on other professional courses of more than four years.

The department has insisted that there was no connection between the withdrawal of students' grants and the wider review. Ministers, however, are likely to wait until they have made a decision on the length of courses before committing themselves to the future structure of student support.



Over the top: the Mongolian contortionists Jamyangnain Erdenechimed and Baltayn Ekhntseeg, loosening up at the Aengen Brothers' circus, which starts its Christmas season at Battersea Park hippodrome, southwest London, tonight

Call for full details on Scottish senate plans

By KERRY GILL

THE Conservative party was asked yesterday to give a full explanation of its plans for an elected Scottish senate at a session of the Scottish grand committee in Edinburgh early in the new year.

Government ministers and senior Conservatives are studying the feasibility of a Scottish senate which would oversee the Scottish Office and could undertake some duties presently controlled by regional councils. The nine regional authorities would be scrapped leaving one tier of local government.

Donald Dewar, Labour's Scottish spokesman, speaking in Glasgow as the Scottish

'Golden boy' John Moore to quit

By SHEILA GUNN, POLITICAL REPORTER

JOHN MOORE has become the sixth MP who has served in a Thatcher cabinet since the last election to announce his retirement from the Commons. He has told his constituency party that he will retire at the end of this parliament.

In contrast Mrs Thatcher and Sir Geoffrey Howe, both older than the retiring cabinet ministers, have not disclosed whether they will fight the next general election. Edward Heath, aged 74, has said he plans to stay on, though colleagues predict he may change his mind after witnessing Mrs Thatcher's downfall.

Other former members of Mrs Thatcher's cabinet to announce this year that they will stand down at the next election are Nigel Lawson, Nicholas Ridley, Peter Walker, Cecil Parkinson and

from the cabinet by Mrs Thatcher last year. He leaves a Tory majority of 12,617 at Croydon Central.

He said yesterday: "I feel especially lucky to have had the chance to serve ten years as a Government minister. However, now I am no longer a minister, my business interests have begun to expand and after the next election the travel involved to north America and the Far East as well as Europe will be more than would be compatible with my duties as an MP."

In common with Cecil Parkinson, Nicholas Ridley and Nigel Lawson, Mr Moore was a keen privatiser and ideologically in tune with the former prime minister's free market and monetarist creed. Within a year of entering the Commons in 1974 he took on the vice-chairmanship of the party with responsibility for youth. In 1979 he started up the ministerial ladder as a junior energy minister, followed by three years at the Treasury as economic and then financial secretary.

He entered the cabinet in 1986 as transport secretary, taking charge of the health and social services department after the 1987 general election. But ill health and hostility from some Tory backbenchers at his swift promotion fatally damaged his rise.

A total of 36 out of the 372 Tory MPs have now announced their retirement at the end of this parliament. Many are long-serving MPs who have reached their 60s or 70s. The elder statesmen include Sir John Stokes (Halesowen and Stourbridge),

Robin Maxwell-Hyslop (Tiverton), Sir William Clark (Croydon South), Sir Paul Dean (Woodspring), the deputy speaker, Sir Geoffrey

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A few younger MPs are also standing down: Michael Latham (Rutland and Melton), Christopher Hawkins (High Peak), David Mudd (Falmouth), Peter Rost (Brewash) and William Benyon (Milton Keynes).

John Browne, the Winchester MP, was deselected after his short suspension from the Commons for failing to declare business interests.

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fears
rises

Major insists only Saddam can now stop war in Gulf

From ROBIN OAKLEY IN WASHINGTON

JOHN Major spent out yesterday that only one man could now prevent war in the Gulf — President Saddam Hussein of Iraq.

The prime minister, in a series of interviews on American television, insisted that a partial withdrawal was not enough and that there could be no question of negotiation with the man who was "dismantling Kuwait day by day" and turning it into what was "essentially a prison camp".

With American public opinion on the use of force much more doubtful than that in Britain, Mr Major told ABC: "The person who can stop the war is Saddam Hussein. If he thinks the West aren't serious, he might ask himself why the United States has 400,000 troops in the Gulf and the UK nearly 40,000. What he has done is unforgivable, and it

has to be reversed. Only he can stop a conflict."

Mr Major and President Bush were last night co-ordinating their tactics in the event of President Saddam seeking to drive wedges into Western policy with a partial withdrawal. Through his interviews yesterday, Mr Major gave repeated warnings that "a partial pull-out won't do," and denied suggestions that the Western alliance would weaken if President Saddam pulled his forces out of the rest of Kuwait, save for two Gulf islands and part of the disputed oilfield.

If President Saddam were allowed to gain anything from his military adventure, he argued, then small countries across the world would wonder about their futures. A moral principle was involved.

Conscious of American opinion polls and of misgivings in Congress, Mr Major said that nobody wanted a war. If President Saddam withdrew, "there will not be a war and he will not be attacked". But Mr Major insisted there could be no question of negotiations with the man responsible for "a unilateral piece of nastiness".

There was, he said, nothing to negotiate about, and it would be encouraging President Saddam to play games.

Mr Major was cautious in his response to the resignation of Edward Shevardnadze, contenting himself with paying tribute to the former Soviet foreign minister's record as a man of peace. He emphasised that the first message from President Gorbachev had been an affirmation that Soviet policy would not change, and noted that the affirmation had been immediately endorsed by the Soviet People's Congress.

He expected that Mr Gorbachev would choose to replace Mr Shevardnadze with another Soviet civilian. Antonov transport aircraft have been hired to ship very heavy equipment to the area. Sources denied that the Soviet transport planes would be taking helicopters on board. Most of the 12 Chinook helicopters being sent are due to go on the merchant ship, Atlantic Conveyor.

With 25 days left, the only sign of Iraqi troop movements is from the north of Iraq down into the theatre of operations. Sources disclosed that the different layers of defensive positions in Kuwait are now each two divisions deep.

Iraq's objective in accumulating so many troops and tanks across Kuwait is to present a deterrent to an allied offensive.

The blueprint for an attack by the allied forces still appears to have a number of serious weaknesses, the most important of which are command and control.

As the deadline approaches, Britain is continuing to seek help from its allies to supply ammunition. Heavy shell production in this country cannot keep up with the demand. By the time all the British reinforcements have arrived in Saudi Arabia, there should be 60,000 tons of ammunition assigned to Britain's Operation Granby.

Underlining the fear that there could be many casualties if there is a war, Britain is providing 1,850 beds for the five field hospitals and 48 surgical teams deployed under Operation Granby. One hundred of the beds will be on the Royal Fleet Auxiliary Vessel, Argus.

Mild mortal replaces a demigod

From MARTIN FLETCHER IN WASHINGTON

When Margaret Thatcher appeared on American television, viewers would have to turn the volume down. When John Major unveiled himself to a curious nation yesterday, they had to turn the volume up. The substance of what they heard, however, was virtually identical.

Making his prime ministerial debut here, Mr Major was awake before dawn and with the make-up artist by 7.00am. Within the next 45 minutes, switching from elegant reception room to elegant reception room in the British ambassador's Lutyens residence, he gave four consecutive interviews to the network breakfast shows, playing the gentle lots of his American questioners with the straightest of bats.

His purpose was clear. Four times he emphasised that he would continue



Bethlehem arrest: a Palestinian, accused of throwing stones at security forces, kneeling yesterday near Manger Square in Bethlehem in the West Bank, guarded by Israeli border policemen armed with M16 rifles

Baghdad decamps to wilderness

From A CORRESPONDENT IN RASHIDIYA

HUNDREDS of thousands of Baghdad residents, according to official figures, poured out of the city yesterday in Iraq's largest ever civil defence drill, mounted to evacuate citizens in case of an air attack.

At the height of the evacuation, Samir Mohammad Abd al-Wahhab, the Iraqi interior minister, toured the dusty, desolate plain of Rashidiya, 10 miles north of Baghdad, and declared himself pleased with the exercise. He issued a warning to the evacuees, the majority of whom came from the Saddam district of East Baghdad, that the next time could be the real thing and to "prepare for the worst".

The carefully arranged nine-hour exercise looked chaotic and was viewed with much scepticism by observers. The common view is that, in the event of war, an air strike on Baghdad would carry no more than a few minutes' warning and certainly give no time to allow civil defence authorities to stage an evacuation on the scale envisaged.

No more than about 10,000 or so evacuees were to be seen in Rashidiya, but officials said hundreds of thousands of others were scattered around this and six other camps near Baghdad. "It proves that we are dealing with this successfully," Mr Wahhab told journalists, standing next to one of hundreds of tents hastily pitched for the occasion. He confirmed that there

He admitted it was "no fun" being awakened at five in the morning to be piled into a bus for the chilly drive to a tent in the middle of nowhere. And his opinion of the threat of war? "Let it come," he replied. "We will fight to defend our honour."

Was he not concerned that

Karami faces uphill fight to build cabinet

From ALI JABER IN BEIRUT

LEBANON's new prime minister, Omar Karami, yesterday started to consult parliamentarians as a first step towards forming a national reconciliation cabinet, amid doubts that his efforts can bring warring militia leaders to sit together in one government.

President Elias Hrawi assigned Mr Karami to form the new cabinet after the former prime minister, Salim al-Hoss, resigned on Wednesday.

Mr Karami, aged 55, comes from a prominent Sunni family in the port city of Tripoli, north of Beirut. He is the brother of the late prime minister, Rashid Karami, who was killed in a helicopter

explosion in 1987. Ironically, Mr Karami is required to invite to his cabinet the various Lebanese militia leaders who fuelled the country's civil war for the past 15 years. Among them is Samir Geagea, leader of the Christian hardline militia, the Lebanese Forces, who was accused by Mr Karami only a month ago of being behind his brother's assassination.

The proposed cabinet will also include rivals who have fought since 1975. Some of them are even wanted by police, such as Elie Hobeika,

whose name was linked to the killing of Palestinian refugees in Beirut's Sabra and Chatila

camp in 1982.

that can be done if you have nothing radically different to say. His interviewers were relieved to encounter a British prime minister not bent on eating them alive, one who discussed and did not hector. "It was like night and day," observed Gene Randal of CNN.

But they also gave the impression that they would soon be missing Mrs Thatcher. Though slightly nervous, Mr Major was polished and articulate, they agreed, but not great television.

"He was determined not to make news," lamented Bill Plante of CBS. "He seems a nice enough fellow but much more grey, and I don't just mean the colour of his hair. Coming after her is going to be quite a burden."

When Mrs Thatcher came to town, there was always a certain electricity in the air. Yesterday Washington was overcast and

gloomy and it poured with rain.

In his stretched limousine Mr Major was whisked from the embassy to the White House to meet Vice-President Dan Quayle, on to the state department to meet James Baker, the Secretary of State, to Capitol Hill for lunch with congressional leaders, then back to the south lawn of the White House to board Marine One with President Bush for the flight to Camp David.

At every stop photo opportunities were laid on. These did not all go quite according to plan. As Mr Major posed for photographers with Mr Quayle, the vice-president began an involved conversation with the American media about American football and whether the New York Giants could function without Phil Simms, their injured quarterback.

Mr Major, a Chelsea fan, looked on baffled.

Relieved Israelis dismiss UN vote

From OUR CORRESPONDENT IN JERUSALEM

ISRAELI officials yesterday dismissed the unanimous United Nations Security Council resolution deplored Israel's deportation of Palestinian activists, but expressed relief that the document did not call for a Middle East peace conference.

Yitzhak Shamir, the prime minister, called the vote anti-Israeli. The resolution "joins the string of negative decisions which rest peacefully in the archives of the United Nations without anyone paying attention to them".

David Levy, the foreign minister, was more conciliatory. He also called the resolution "an anti-Israeli proposal" and said of the United Nations: "There is no justice there." He noted, however, that the United States had managed to get the call for an international conference out of the resolution and into a separate, non-binding statement read by the security council's president.

It is important to see what the United States did in order to neutralise many harsh, anti-Israeli formulas from the resolution, Mr Levy said in a broadcast on army radio.

But Mr Levy criticised the Americans for not vetoing the resolution, saying the US felt pressured not to damage the Arab coalition it put together in the Gulf. Israel has consistently opposed an international conference, fearing it could be pressured to make unwanted concessions.

The UN vote is the third time that the United States has declined to protect Israel from international criticism at the United Nations. Earlier, the United States twice supported resolutions that criticised Israel's handling of the Temple Mount incident on October 8, in which at least 18 Palestinians were killed by police gunfire.

Palestinians have stepped up their call for international protection from the Israelis. Some said yesterday they were disappointed that the UN resolution did not take stronger steps to protect them.

• Christian appeal: Nine Roman Catholic, Greek Orthodox and Protestant bishops in the Holy Land appealed yesterday for world leaders to "follow the course of negotiation" to prevent war in the region and expressed concern about human rights violations in the occupied territories.

Khmer leader collapses at talks

From JOHN PHILLIPS IN PARIS

A CONFERENCE to consider a UN peace plan for Cambodia hit trouble yesterday when Hun Sen, the Cambodian prime minister, was rushed to hospital after collapsing in the conference after collapsing.

Sources said Mr Sen was suffering only from "fatigue" after arriving on the long flight from Cambodia. Witnesses who saw him in the ambulance said he was conscious.

France earlier told the Cambodian leaders attending the talks to accept the UN proposals quickly, because the international community had "other priorities" as well.

About 150 Cambodians, including a dozen Buddhist monks chanting and beating drums, demonstrated and waved placards saying "Cambodia wants peace now" outside the Kleber Centre in Paris, where the new Cambodian National Supreme Council was meeting.

An official schedule for the discussions echoed speculation by Western and Asian diplomats that the meeting could collapse in disarray. It said the talks would continue today "in the event that the work is pursued".

The participants included the Khmer Rouge leader, Khieu Samphan, and his defence minister, Son Sen, who is widely believed to have been responsible, together with Pol Pot, for the mass killings carried out by Khmer Rouge guerrillas in the late 1970s. Also present were Norodom Ranariddh, the son of the flamboyant former Cambodian monarch, Prince Norodom Sihanouk, who chose not to attend.

The French foreign minister, Roland Dumas, opened the proceedings in his capacity as co-chairman, with Indonesia, of an international conference seeking an end to the conflict. "The international community cannot concentrate indefinitely on the fate of Cambodia," he said.

"Gambles on time are in vain," he said. "Other priorities require and will require our attention," he said in an obvious reference to the Gulf confrontation.

The supreme national council consists of six representatives of the Cambodian government and two from each of the three main resistance groups. It is designed to represent Cambodian sovereignty before elections.



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Western banks see little use for aid without Soviet reforms

By SUSAN ELICOTT IN WASHINGTON AND MICHAEL BINION IN BRUSSELS

THE Soviet Union should launch deep reforms of its economy before Western nations provide massive financial aid to support its large budget deficit, according to a broad survey carried out for the seven leading industrial nations by the world's top lending institutions.

"Without such a reform, additional financial resources would be of little or no lasting value," the 50-page report said. "With it, assistance could provide important support during a time of a difficult transition to integration of the USSR into the world economy, with benefits for all partners."

The report by institutions including the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the Organisation of Economic Co-operation and Development and the newly formed European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, was the most thorough

to date of the Soviet economy. It was sent to leaders of G-7 countries on Thursday.

In a separate report, the European Commission said in Brussels yesterday that the resignation of Eduard Shevardnadze makes a collapse of the Soviet economy more likely and will slow down the process of reform.

"Despite Mr Shevardnadze's motives, it is extremely difficult to appreciate his decision," a senior EC official responsible for coordinating EC food aid said.

He predicted that the turmoil now unleashed would make the need for aid more urgent, but would make it even harder for the Russians to produce a feasible plan for reform.

Announcing the results of the extensive EC study of the Soviet economic institutions and political structures, the official said "reform fatigue" had now set in. Without public support, the reforms would not catch on.

The 217-page report, com-



Kremlin gallery: speakers at the Congress of People's Deputies where debate continued yesterday on the way through the current political turmoil, from left, Anatoli Sobchak, mayor of Leningrad, Vladimir Chernyak, a deputy from Kiev, and Yevgeni Primakov, front-runner to succeed Eduard Shevardnadze as foreign minister

Georgia to set up national guard

From ANATOL LIEVEN
IN TBILISI

THE Georgian Supreme Council is to pass a law on Monday establishing a national guard as the nucleus for a future Georgian army. This is likely to increase fears among Georgia's national minorities as well as among Georgian political forces opposed to the government of Zviad Gamsakhurdia.

The resignation of Eduard Shevardnadze has raised fears in Georgia of impending Soviet repression. The existence of the guard might in theory do something to deter this.

Attitudes to Mr Shevardnadze in his native republic are mixed. Many people despise him as a loyal member of the Soviet elite. Some Georgians, however, were also proud to have a compatriot playing such a critical role.

Mr Shevardnadze was responsible for the repression of dissent during his time as first secretary of the Georgian Communist Party under Brezhnev, and is also held responsible for the execution of six Georgian hijackers of a plane.

However, during language demonstrations in 1979 he is also held to have prevented a mass killing by Soviet troops. He is seen as having helped prevent the Georgian autonomous republic of Abkhazia from breaking away to join the Russian Federation. It is not out of the question that he might play some role in Georgian politics in future.

The decision to form the national guard has been speeded up by the crisis in the rebel Georgian autonomous region of South Ossetia, where three Georgian Supreme Council guards and one Ossete were killed in an armed clash last week.

The national guard is to be made up of conscripts from among Georgian youths who are refusing conscription into the Soviet army. The bill will establish "strict criteria" for recruitment, and it is suspected that these may tacitly exclude members of Georgia's national minorities.

Some Georgians fear that the core of the new guard will be the armed volunteers of Mr Gamsakhurdia's Round Table bloc, and that there could be clashes between the guard and armed volunteers belonging to other parties. The largest of these are the Mkhedrioni, or "Horsemen", aligned with the radical nationalist Georgian Congress. The congress regards itself as Georgia's legitimate representative body and rejects the authority of Mr Gamsakhurdia's government. The Mkhedrioni consist of about 8,000 men, 2,000 of them with firearms.

Kremlin colonels, page 8
Leading article, page 9



Wolfe: diplomatic about the film of his novel



Bleak mid-winter: shoppers wandering round a big Moscow supermarket hung with festive Christmas tinsel and bright food section indicators. All that is missing is the food to buy

biggest disasters since *Ishar* or *Heaven's Gate*, those other high-priced flops of recent Hollywood history. "A glitzy dad," said Variety.

De Palma had just got it completely wrong, said most reviewers who included a few amateurs such as Edward Koch, the former mayor and a figure caricatured in the book. "Bonfire is worth seeing if you liked *Dick Tracy* and *Batman*," sniffed Mr Koch, the man who presided over the city's decade of stretched limousines. He reviewed the film for *The Wall Street Journal*, the parish daily of the masters of the universe.

But even with that caution, the movie world was taken aback by the savagery unleashed by the critics on Brian De Palma's version when it opened yesterday. "A misfire of a thousand inanities ... This is a failure of epic proportion. You've got to be a genius to make a movie this bad," said Joel Siegel, of ABC television, in a typical appraisal. The film, which stars Tom Hanks and Bruce Willis, is being depicted as one of the

book. McCoy's mistake is his failure to report a car accident. He becomes the victim of a racial-political furor in which he loses everything.

"Not a bonfire, but a pilot light of the inanities," said *The Washington Post*. "A calamity of miscasting and commercial concessions." *USA Today* wondered if the scriptwriter had read the book. "Thudding dialogue ... appallingly wrong-headed," said its review. "Gross and unfunny," said *The New York Times*. "This movie never seems to know what it's supposed to be."

De Palma's mistake, in everyone's opinion, was to try to make a cartoon-like moral fable out of a satire that lambasted with equal ferocity Wall Street wizards, Park Avenue socialites, ambitious politicians, Harlem punks and drunken British newspapermen. Responding to the dictates of

Hollywood and the racial taboos of the Bush age, De Palma softened the attack on New York blacks and scrapped the grim ending in favour of a sugary coda in which the Bronx judge, transformed from Jewish to black, tells the hero: "Go home and be decent."

Nobody, but nobody, in New York talks like that. Equally implausible, the critics noted, was Bruce Willis's portrayal of Fallow, the reporter who pursues McCoy. In the book Fallow was an archetypal Lunachite O'Booze, transplanted from Fleet Street. Willis plays him as a heavy-drinking American, a type which no longer exists.

Apart from anything else the final scene is "a monumental legal error," said Mr Koch, who is now a practising lawyer again. Burton Roberts, the Bronx judge who provided the model for Judge

Myron Kovinsky, thought the whole movie was a farce.

Wolfe, who reaped several hundred thousand pounds from the film rights, has remained diplomatic. "This is Brian De Palma's movie, with his own version of the plot, his own dialogue, his signature on whatever he does," the author said.

But others noted yesterday that New York hardly needed to see the film, since the black comedy of real life in the Big Apple continues to rival anything a satirist could dream up. In two episodes that could have come straight from the novel on Thursday, the Speaker of the New York assembly was charged with corruption, and in a city court a teenager interrupted the judge who was lecturing him after his conviction for raping a woman aged 82. "Hey, judge, just sentence me already," he shouted. He got 25 years.

Lithuanian fears

Tokyo — Kazimiera Pruskiene, the Lithuanian prime minister, said hardliners were gaining the upper hand in Kremlin policy in a development that could lead to the imposition of martial law in the three Soviet Baltic republics. She was verging on tears at times as she commented on Mr Shevardnadze's resignation. Mrs Pruskiene was in Japan for an unofficial visit. (Reuter)

PLO hopes rise

Tunis — Abdullah Hourani, a member of the executive committee of the Palestine Liberation Organisation and a frequent visitor to Moscow, said the PLO hoped that, with the resignation of Mr Shevardnadze, the Kremlin would abandon "provocative" Middle East policies and distance itself from America. (Reuter)

New York condemns Hollywood's Bonfire to the stake

From CHARLES BRENNER
IN NEW YORK

PERHAPS nobody should have tried to make a film out of *The Bonfire of the Vanities*, Tom Wolfe's withering satire of New York on the crest of the roaring Eighties. The 1987 novel, with its "masters of the universe" financiers and cast of local rogues, is now so embedded in the city's mythology that any film would seem presumptuous.

But even with that caution, the movie world was taken aback by the savagery unleashed by the critics on Brian De Palma's version when it opened yesterday. "A misfire of a thousand inanities ... This is a failure of epic proportion. You've got to be a genius to make a movie this bad," said Joel Siegel, of ABC television, in a typical appraisal. The film, which stars Tom Hanks and Bruce Willis, is being depicted as one of the

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Hoxha widow follows Stalin statue into retirement

From RICHARD BASSETT AND DESSA TREVOR IN BELGRADE

TWO symbols of hardline communist rule in Albania were removed from positions of power yesterday. Nekhmije Hoxha, the widow of Albania's dictator, Enver Hoxha, retired as president of the influential Democratic Front, a communist-dominated political umbrella organisation.

At the same time, a vast statue of Stalin was taken down in Tirana's Skanderbeg Square. By a special government decree all Stalin statues were ordered to be dismantled throughout Albania.

The departure of Mrs Hoxha, officially for reasons of old age, paves the way for

Woman dies in Greek earthquake

Athens — An elderly woman was killed and more than 60 people injured in a violent earthquake that shook northern Greece and neighbouring Bulgaria (Chris Eliou writes).

The tremor, measuring 5.5 on the Richter scale, was about 35 miles northwest of Thessaloniki, Greece's northern capital. It was strongly felt in most towns and cities of central and western Macedonia, causing panic among inhabitants who rushed out to village and city squares.

Prisoner contact

Peking — Richard Schifter, America's top human rights official, managed to meet a Chinese dissident detained last year, a Western resident said. Mr Schifter met the unnamed academic in Shanghai, and although the authorities were probably aware of the meeting they may not have approved it. (Reuters)

Chamorro gains

Managua — President Chamorro of Nicaragua won a battle over funding for the country's armed forces when the national assembly voted after an all-night session to support her veto of a huge army spending cut. The assembly voted 69-21 with one abstention. (Reuters)

Athens order

Athens — A Greek special magistrate said that he would order police to bring Andreas Papandreou, the former Socialist prime minister, to court to answer criminal charges of complicity in a bank embezzlement scandal. Mr Papandreou is to appear for pre-trial testimony. (Reuters)

Wages of sin

Atlanta — The Roman Catholic church in Georgia spent more than \$21,000 (£11,000), mainly for medical bills, on the mistress of a former archbishop, Eugene Marino, church officials said. (Reuters)

Army spurned at Romanian rallies

From TIM JUDAH IN BUCHAREST

IN THE months after the Romanian revolution, anti-government demonstrators would take to the streets shouting: "The army is with us." When tens of thousands of people came out on to the streets of Bucharest yesterday, the first anniversary of the killings which fired the revolution, this slogan was conspicuously absent, for there is now a widespread belief that the army was deeply involved in the killings.

People packed the main squares of Bucharest, Timisoara and other towns yesterday. In Bucharest, the commemoration ceremony turned into an anti-government protest as crowds in University Square demanded the resignation of President Iliescu and his National Salvation Front government.

Two senators were heckled and prevented from laying wreaths at a shrine for the dead and the windscrews of their car was smashed. "Go away, traitors," the protesters shouted at the senators, Gelu Voican and Dan Iosif, who had been among last year's anti-Ceausescu demonstrators. They escaped unharmed.

A year ago the events of the revolution were easily explained. As the regime of Nicolae Ceausescu and his wife, Elena, crumbled, loyal units of his dreaded Securitate opened fire on the crowds. According to generally accepted official figures, they killed 1,039 people and



Taste of the West: Soviet soldiers drinking Cokes at a Christmas party at their base in Potsdam, near Berlin

Berliners extend Christmas cheer to Soviet troops

From ANNE MCÉLVOY IN BERLIN

THE luckier Soviet soldiers stationed around Berlin will swap the unpalatable rations of their chilly barracks for a cosy German Christmas next week when they are allowed to visit Berlin families in their homes for the first time.

About 250 will sit down to goose and stuffed carp as the guests of east and west Berliners who have offered them a break from the monotonous isolation they face as they await withdrawal from what was East Germany.

The pilot scheme to break down barriers between Germans and the 360,000 troops stationed there is the idea of the tabloid *Bild-Zeitung*, which has thrived for decades on unashamed communism-bashing, in improbable co-operation with the German-Soviet Friendship Society, which was run until last year by the East German state and dedicated to disseminating pro-Soviet propaganda.

Monika Preiser has invited two soldiers to join her family in east Berlin for the holiday. "For so many years we have been on the receiving end of kindness from our relatives in the west. Now that things are

better for us we wanted to share our good fortune," she said.

"But most of all we want to give them some warmth and a good meal. They have a miserable time here: people take out on them their bitterness for what happened between our countries."

Her son Albi, aged 15, is enthusiastic about the chance to practise his Russian, until recently a compulsory subject in eastern schools. "We were constantly told about the great brotherland and the proud Red Army, but when you see them here on the streets they just look hungry and depressed," he said.

The Preisers are rare in their readiness to forgive the Soviet Union for holding their country as a satellite for 40 years. Only 50 families in the east have invited soldiers as guests. From the western part of the city, offers are still pouring in.

For west Berliners there is a strong element of curiosity and novelty about having a Soviet Army soldier to Christmas lunch," said Birgit Dobrig, one of the scheme's organisers.

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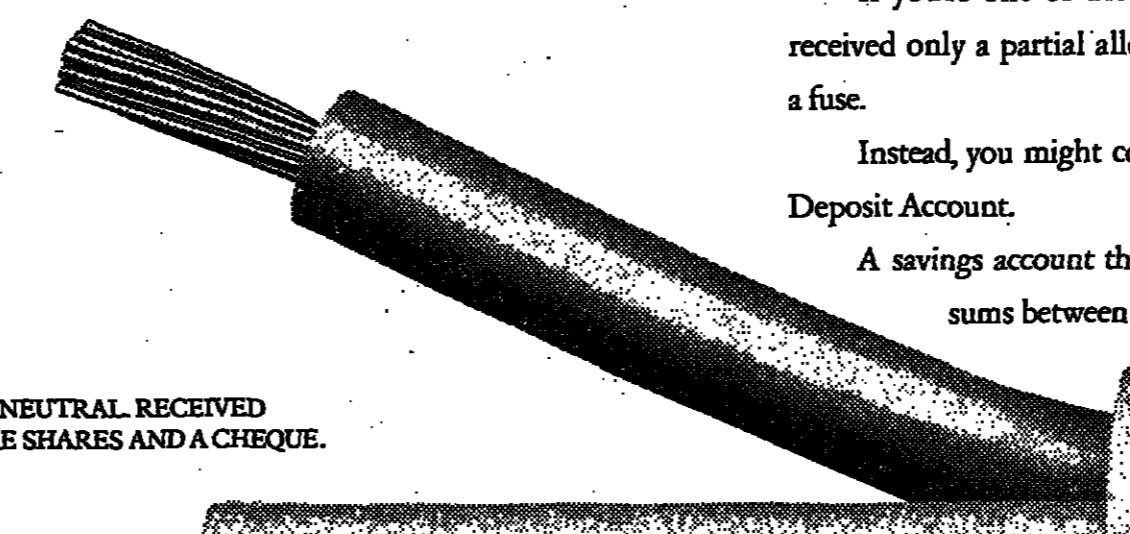
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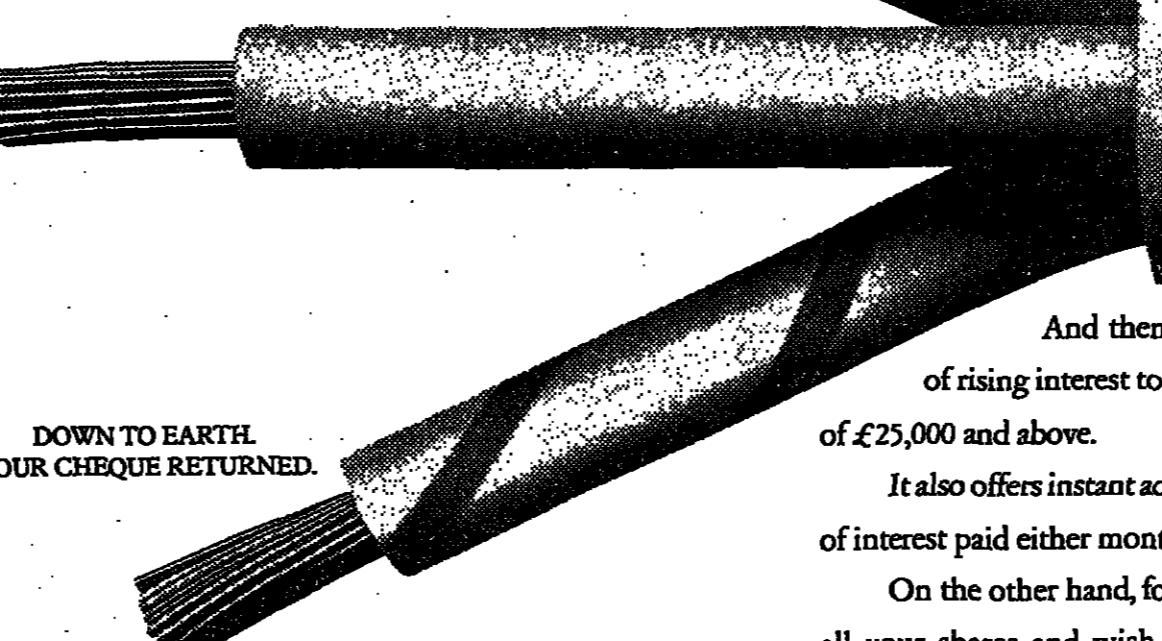
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Compassion and Mersey

Clifford Longley

Roman Catholicism in England and Wales was not in great shape in 1965. It was suspicious of other churches and of secular society and trapped in a ghetto by out-of-date rules and customs. It was about to experience the impact of the Second Vatican Council, which ended that year – and which might have torn it to bits. English Catholicism from 1850 to 1965 represented the triumph of Cardinals Wiseman and Manning and the eclipse of Cardinal Newman, the triumph of the "ultramontane" model of Catholicism over the conciliar.

A quarter of a century later, the church is hardly recognisable. Catholic churchmen all over the world envy the quality of its ecumenical relations, its unity of mind and purpose, its quiet liberality, its subtle grasp of church-state relations, its commitment to a faith that is both entirely orthodox and smoothly adaptable. While the Catholic church elsewhere is in a state of upheaval, the English branch just gets on with its job. It has become the church of Newman.

The explanation for this turnaround lies in personalities more than in policies, insofar as the two can be separated. The character of the English Catholic church changed with the character of the English Catholic churchman. Cardinal John Heenan was a key transitional figure, and his successor, Cardinal Basil Hume, confirmed the transition. Behind the scenes, credit must go to the apostolic delegate (later nuncio) for many of those years, Archbishop Bruno Heinz. But more than any of them, the story of those 25 years is the story of Archbishop Derek Worlock, who last night celebrated in Liverpool the silver jubilee of his consecration as a bishop.

His background is unusual for a Catholic priest of his generation (he was 70 this year), in that his father was a local agent for the Conservative party in Hampshire, his mother a suffragette. Soon after ordination, he was chosen as a private secretary by Cardinal Griffin – the first of three such posts under successive cardinals in 20 years. Then Worlock had a spell in Stepney as a parish priest before his appointment as Bishop of Portsmouth in 1965.

It was his attendance throughout the Second Vatican Council in Rome (from 1962 to 1965), as a consultant and finally as a member, which transformed his career. He was totally convinced by the council, and above all he understood it. The council wrote the agenda through which international Catholicism has been working ever since, and his position has given him enormous authority to shape events.

At this distance one can forget how remarkable the Second Vatican Council was like a mighty battleship at full speed in a storm, turning through 180 degrees. A lot of the deck damage has still not been repaired, and many of the

...and moreover

MATTHEW PARRIS

Mrs Thatcher's resignation honours list is a bore. There are no crooks in it. The best the media have been able to do is trawl through lists of people who might be ill-disposed towards somebody honoured and invite them to "hit out" or "protest". Did, for instance, "representatives" of the "relatives of the victims" of the Herald of Free Enterprise disaster take the initiative in "lashing out" at Sir Jeffrey Sterling's life peerage? Or did it occur to some canny newspaper person that here was a near-empty honey jar with perhaps a final smear for the first enterprising lass or ladder to place a few judicious telephone calls?

What a snivelling way to invent the news. Why not be bold? In that attempt, I am now able to unveil the *real* resignation honours list. This is the secret list, carried only in Mrs Thatcher's heart: the one she dare not reveal.

It divides into two parts. First there are the honours for the individuals who did most to boost and sustain the Thatcher career. These are almost entirely her enemies. For this is a woman who, by the end, had few friends but who, in the range and quality of her enemies, was magnificently endowed. She owes everything to them. It was through conflict with these people that she won her spurs. These are the men and women who gave her the battles of her choice, at the time of her choice – and lost.

It starts with a composite award – the freedom of the city of Liverpool – to the two trade unions which, in the winter of 1978, made it all possible. Step forward, Nalgo and Nupu. Our congratulations.

Secondly, for his behind-the-scenes work with the loony left, and for fronting one of Mrs Thatcher's most reliable electoral assets, the Greater London Council... come on down, Kenneth Livingstone! Gosh, Ken, if you were still there, she would still be here. Who would have elected John Major to sort out the GLC?

You may think my choice of Dame Mary Warnock to stand

crew were washed overboard, never to return. But at last the vessel was heading towards the future rather than the past. There are no charts of such waters, but the documents and decrees of the council, still almost as fresh as they were 30 years ago, lay down the broad principles of navigation. Derek Worlock has proved himself the master navigator.

Outside the Catholic church he is best known for his unique relationship with his Liverpool opposite number, the Right Rev David Sheppard, now the outstanding bishop on the Anglican bench. In no other city in Britain have the two leading churchmen (not to mention their partner, the Methodist Dr John Newton) even remotely comparable civic weight and prestige. In their time, Liverpool, the most self-destructive of cities, has been through every kind of agony and anguish short of earthquake, and at each turn of the knife "Derek and David" have been at the city's bedside together, pastors nursing it through. But in the long list of disasters – Toxteth, Heyzel, Hillsborough, municipal bankruptcy, the worst unemployment and some of the worst housing in England – there is no mention of inter-faith rioting, no overspill from Belfast, even in the one place in England where bitter Protestant-Catholic communal tension was once endemic.

This does not begin to measure Derek Worlock's contribution, however, for much of it has been hidden even from ordinary Catholics in the pews. He has been vice-president of the Roman Catholic Bishops' Conference since shortly after going to Liverpool, and the one man above all on whom Cardinal Hume relies. He has raised the National Conference of Priests to maturity, while never letting it become the defiant opposition to the hierarchy it might easily have been. He has spent countless committee hours holding the organised laity in dialogue, not least through the potentially explosive conflict after Humanæ Vitæ in 1968. His words then – that birth control was "not the acid test of Christianity" – have held that dispute in check in England ever since. And he was one of the chief architects, perhaps the master builder, of the Inter-Church Process and of the successor bodies to the British Council of Churches that came into being earlier this year. Suffice to say that without him, all this would have fallen through. Yet he has never been physically strong, nor free of illness.

Pope John Paul II may or may not have thought of it already, but Archbishop Derek Worlock is one of the few Catholic church leaders alive today who, on the merits of personal service to the church (rather than *ex officio* position), have earned the ultimate earthly recognition: a papal benediction. After 25 years, Archbishop Worlock fully deserves a red hat.

It was the church at Rome that led in imitating pagan practice by celebrating Christ as a king, and by 336 it had moved his feast day to December 25 apparently to clash with the feast of the sun, *Natalis invicti solis*, the chief festival of the followers of the cult of Mithras. To Eastern churches, this seemed amazingly pagan. The Armenians refused to accept the new date, and to this day celebrate the Nativity on January 6.

Is Christmas essentially a pagan festival, or did the early church deliberately confront and defeat these pagan observances? The choice of date points to a bid for supremacy rather than a surrender to influence. For theologians, the exact date mattered little; for the masses, the inherited symbolism of pagan festivals still carried immense weight. When the celebration of Christ's Nativity was moved from January 6 to December 25, the intervening period was coloured by the association to the church at Rome that led in imitating pagan practice by celebrating Christ as a king, and by 336 it had moved his feast day to December 25 apparently to clash with the feast of the sun, *Natalis invicti solis*, the chief festival of the followers of the cult of Mithras. To Eastern churches, this seemed amazingly pagan. The Armenians refused to accept the new date, and to this day celebrate the Nativity on January 6.

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Then, for a shorter stint than Dame Mary and Comrade Ken, but one of heroic intensity, we honour Arthur Scargill. Like Ken, Arthur succeeded both in tripping up his own side, and rallying his enemies at the same time. Well done, Arthur. And eat your heart out, Derek Hation. For your own honour you will have to wait for Neil Kinnock's list.

Michael Foot's contribution is now sometimes overlooked, but it was less spectacular, but through all those early, dark years of economic failure at home and cock-up abroad, Mr Foot never once failed to make the alternative look so much worse.

Finally in this section, our overseas award. An easy choice. True, Colonel Gaddafi was a strong runner-up, but he never really took Mrs Thatcher's head, and so was never truly beaten. That distinction goes to Leopoldo Galtieri, who gave a great political party out of a great political abyss. Recalling what the Armada did for Elizabeth I, Galtieri wins the Medina de Sidonia award.

The second section of our list is for people Mrs Thatcher genuinely hates, and who genuinely hurt her. First, then, our counterpart to the OB (Order of the Bath), the OAB (Order of the Acid Bath) goes to... but let us wait. The New Year honours will be with us soon.

The Kremlin colonels taste power

Bruce Clark in Moscow reports on the struggle leaving Gorbachev isolated



Alksnis: sophisticated and knowing how to appeal to the people

Twelve months ago it was possible to guess the next political move in Moscow by seeking out strident reformers and identifying their most radical demands – multi-party democracy, market economics, a looser federation. Today, if any players on the Soviet stage look convincing in the part of weather-vanes, it is the two men whom the radicals call the "black colonels": Viktor Alksnis and Nikolai Petrushenko. These are the parliamentarians in uniform whom Eduard Shevardnadze, the foreign minister, accuses of forcing his downfall.

As region blockades region, farm boycotts city, race fights race and shops cease to exist, the idea is taking hold that only one thing is worse than heavy-handed authority, and that is no authority. In Colonel Alksnis in particular, the rediscovered virtues of authoritarianism have found an advocate who is considerably more sophisticated than most of the communist warhorses who have lumbered across the political scene in recent years.

Both he and Colonel Petrushenko are 40; both are serving officers in far-flung parts of the empire where Russians feel under threat from local nationalists. Alksnis is a little firebrand, an air force engineer from Latvia who thinks and feels like a Russian.

become naughty in a large and strong family while their parents are doing a big and difficult job". These days Colonel Petrushenko looks anything but ridiculous. Amid intensified fears of repression in the Baltic states, his talk about leaving the Lithuanian children "without enough pocket money to buy ice-cream" sound smirch rather than comic.

Bearing the scalps of two liberal ministers – Vadim Bakatin, who was stripped of the interior portfolio two weeks ago, and now Mr Shevardnadze – Colonel Alksnis is positively triumphant. In his "victory speech" after the foreign minister stepped down, he emphasised the two issues well calculated to unite ideological conservatives and ordinary people: Mr Shevardnadze's alleged willingness to commit Soviet forces to fight Iraq and the genuine hardship and humiliation that is being suffered by Soviet service families as they return from Eastern Europe with nowhere to live.

Colonel Alksnis is the founder and prime mover of the parliamentary lobby known as Soyuz which claims the loyalty of 20 to 25 per cent of the Congress of People's Deputies and the broad sympathy of many more for its aim of keeping the Soviet Union together. But his most specific proposals are voiced on his own behalf alone, and they reflect greater sophistication than could readily be found among ordinary Soyuz members who long for a return to orthodoxy communism.

It is too clever to imagine that there is any route back to communism; so he proposes that the free market be imposed by force of arms, as he says American occupation forces did in Japan after 1945. He has also proposed that elected assemblies at all levels be suspended in favour of a Romanian-style national salvation council, with wide-ranging powers. Although a communist, he would include the Communist party in a temporary ban on all political activity.

If these proposals seem fantastic now, then so would the ousting of Mr Shevardnadze have sounded only a few months ago. The conservative camp is now exuding

the same confidence in its ability to set the political pace that the radicals exuded a year ago. Optimistic liberals reply to Colonel Alksnis's proposals as they do to the televised threats to suppress dissent issued recently by the defence minister, Dmitry Yazov, and the KGB chief, Vladimir Kryuchkov.

They question the feasibility of a crackdown throughout the Soviet Union by security forces which already look overstretched and demoralised and which are viewed in many regions with unmilitated hostility. Furthermore, they argue, if the conservatives get their way with Mr Gorbachev, or oust him, they must still contend with the formidable figure of Boris Yeltsin, who seems uncompromising in his determination to consolidate the Russian republic's independence.

Colonel Alksnis is at a relatively early stage in winning hearts and minds, but if his radical critics are to be believed, he speaks for at least part of the military establishment, including some of the generals.

If the political and economic crisis deepens, then the two camps may at some stage be forced to talk to one another, across Mr Gorbachev's head; and at that point the shape of a post-Gorbachev Russia may come into view.

Innovation on a pagan base, but with a message for us all

Jonathan Clark draws together the many strands from many lands that make up our modern Christmas

Christmas, as Scrooge correctly observed, is humbug. The traditions of Christmas are growing stale. Worse still, we suspect that the traditions are not all that they seem. Some are invented, and not so long ago at that. Others were built on sand.

To begin with, it was far from obvious that the early church would celebrate Christ's birth at all. Celebrating rulers' birthdays was a Roman custom, initially rejected by Christians as pagan. Not did Christians know the day of the Nativity, which was not recorded in scripture or in imperial records. Contemporary theories included November 17, April 28, April 19 or 20 and May 20.

Early Christians celebrated Christ's baptism and presentation to the Magi at the feast of the Epiphany, January 6. Even this was chosen, according to one theory, because it was the day of the winter solstice in the Egyptian calendar; the Julian calendar, in use at Rome, placed the solstice on December 25.

It was the church at Rome that led in imitating pagan practice by celebrating Christ as a king, and by 336 it had moved his feast day to December 25 apparently to clash with the feast of the sun, *Natalis invicti solis*, the chief festival of the followers of the cult of Mithras. To Eastern churches, this seemed amazingly pagan. The Armenians refused to accept the new date, and to this day celebrate the Nativity on January 6.

"Santa Claus" was an American misnomer. He was a garbled version of St Nicholas, the 4th-century Turkish saint of whom nothing certain is known (or perhaps ever was), who yet inspired widespread devotion across Europe. Becoming patron saint of Russia usefully equipped him with the reindeer. After restoring to life three children who had been chopped up by a butcher and popped into a salting vat, he not unnaturally became the patron saint of children too. Dutch settlers at New Amsterdam in America took him along in his Dutch guise as "Sinter Claes"; their Anglophone neighbours turned him into Santa Claus a wholly secularised symbol of bounty and goodwill, a benevolent magician, the epitome, for children, of the gift culture.

In Catholic theology, gift-giving officially echoes the visit of the wise men from the East to the infant Christ, and their tributes of gold, frankincense and myrrh. Some countries transferred this symbolism from the Epiphany to December 25 when that became the key date; others did not. Presents at Christmas used to be a characteristic of Teutonic societies; the French followed the Roman custom on January 1; Spanish and Italian adults exchanged gifts on January 6. Catholic children for a long time hung up their stockings on December 6, St Nicholas's Day.

Gradually, the Christian symbolism weakened. The link with the Nativity was never strong; and in the background was always the winter festival, associated with a gift-giver. Once he was Odin, riding the forests on his magic horse Sleipnir, rewarding good and



SAINT NICOLA
AERIAL CHEZ JEAN-PIERRE M. CARTIER D

The Turkish miracle worker who restored three children to life, and now every December brings cheer to millions

gold, frankincense and myrrh. Some countries transferred this symbolism from the Epiphany to December 25 when that became the key date; others did not. Presents at Christmas used to be a characteristic of Teutonic societies; the French followed the Roman custom on January 1; Spanish and Italian adults exchanged gifts on January 6. Catholic children for a long time hung up their stockings on December 6, St Nicholas's Day.

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punishing evil; then he merged into St Nicholas, in bishop's habit, still with a moral role; now he is the scarlet-clad Santa, provider of indiscriminate largesse.

Most of the trappings of Christmas can be dated. The cult of the crib originated with St Francis of Assisi in the early 13th century. A carol was a medieval ring dance, later the dancing song, but most of the best ones are modern: "Good King Wenceslaus", despite its medieval setting, was composed in 1866; "Away in a Manger", though sometimes attributed to Martin Luther, first appeared in Philadelphia in 1885.

Mince pies date from the 16th century, plum pudding from the 17th, but the grand English dinner dish was a boar's head (the

legendary food of the heroes in Valhalla); turkey was unknown until exported from Mexico in the 1530s and only the New England puritans were austere enough to celebrate with that dry and stringy bird until it caught on from America in our time.

Decorating houses with evergreens went back to Roman antiquity; Christians took up the holly and the ivy, reading symbolic significance into them, but banned the mistletoe, the druids' sacred plant. German settlers took the Christmas tree to America but it really caught on when Prince Albert had one set up in Windsor Castle in 1841. Dickens disapproved, calling it "the new German toy", but social emulation guaranteed its success, replacing the native kissing bough and its sprig of mistletoe – too erotic a symbol for the Victorian drawing room.

It is bit by bit our Christmas was invented. Historians who dwell on the "invention of tradition" are generally trying to sneer: your practices are irrational inheritances, my practices are rational and deliberate. Yet some of our most recent Christmas traditions are the most moving. One in particular – the service of nine lessons and carols from King's College, Cambridge, which dates only from 1918 – is the most successfully sacred in a resolutely secular world.

Despite the indelible pagan symbolism, there were strong theological reasons for making Christmas rather than Epiphany the major event. It was a way of emphasising that the divine element was in Christ from the first, and did not depend on his baptism, celebrated at Epiphany. More important still, it was a way of countering 4th-century Arian objections to the doctrine of the incarnation. Christmas was a triumphant affirmation of God's birth in human flesh: a sacred and secular celebration in defiance of those who wanted to elevate Christ, or to demote him to the human level of a wise and good moral teacher. If so, perhaps our half-pagan Christmas has a role today, humbug or no humbug.

The author is a fellow of All Souls College, Oxford.

during the explosion of the Ugandan Asians. We were taken to a prison in Makindu outside Kampala. We were badly treated."

Covering the invasion by Tanzanian forces seven years later, ITN journalist Mark Webster was in the prison when it was overrun and picked up the keys as a memento. Harrison says: "Mark and I were in Madrid together a few weeks ago and he mentioned the keys. He had no idea that I was once in that very same jail. Now he has given me the keys for Christmas."

If you thought that estate agents' hyperbole had long ago reached its apogee, think again. Cambridge-based Bidwells, in a bullish report on the impact of the 1992 single market on property prices, declares: "As things stand, East Anglia is in the right place at the right time." How good to know there is no need to move to it.

On your icicle

To prepare for his attempt to reach the North Pole, Sir Ranulph Fiennes immersed himself for long periods in an ice cold bath. His example has been followed by the Australian mountaineer, Brigitte Muir. As part of her acclimatisation programme for the assault on Mt Vinson Massif, the highest mountain in Antarctica, she spent two days in a frostbite-inducing freezer at Sydney fishmarket. Muir, a 32-year-old archaeologist, was accompanied by the four members of her back-up team, and hopes that after the 40 hours in the -30°C congealed freezer, they will find Antarctica positively balmy.

The assault on Vinson Massif is

part of Muir's plan to be the first woman to climb the highest peak of every continent. She has already climbed Africa's Mt Kilimanjaro, and what she believes are the highest peaks in Australasia, Europe and America.

PRAGMATIC

BEST BEFORE FEB 1

It's



1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 071-782 5000

STALIN'S LONG SHADOW

In his lifetime, a light burned in the Kremlin all night, reminding the masses that "Stalin never sleeps". This week, one of the last remaining statues of Stalin was demolished in the last state still to claim him as its inspiration, Albania. Stalin is dead. But is he? Even today, the popular rejection of totalitarianism from Mongolia across the steppes of Russia to cultivated central Europe seems ominously insecure. The chilling fear remains that Stalin and his *ism* cannot be toppled with a crowbar and a cheering crowd.

The warning of a return to dictatorship with which Eduard Shevardnadze resigned as Soviet foreign minister this week served to remind his countrymen that democratic institutions and the rule of law are not yet entrenched in the vast empire Stalin dominated for three brutal decades. That warning has relevance beyond the Soviet Union's borders. As the ethnic turbulence and border disputes suppressed by Stalin resurface in the Soviet Union and in Eastern Europe, rulers will inevitably be tempted to crush challenges to their power by the force of arms, even if they reject a single overwhelming ideology.

In Tirana, the dawn of Stalin's 11th birthday yesterday may have been full of hopeful symbolism. All day groups of Albanians watched the demolishing of the plinth on which Stalin had stood and wondered when the statue of Enver Hoxha, Albania's Stalinist dictator from 1946 to 1985, would follow. Their compatriots in the provincial city, Shkodra, had already settled the question. Once the authorities had removed Stalin's statue, demonstrators blew up Hoxha's. But the toppling of statues draws attention not to what is gone, but what lies ahead.

So long as the apparatus of terror remains intact in the interior ministries, the secret police and the militias, so long can the forces of Stalinism be reassembled. China since the massacre in Tiananmen Square may be a better guide than the rumour-mills of Moscow and Leningrad. There, the old men of Peking have closed ranks to restore "stability", in much the same spirit that the hardliners who sought Mr Shevardnadze's head now demand the restoration of "order" in the Soviet Union. Political repression in the name of revived Maoist orthodoxy has gone hand in hand with attempts to reimpose the certainties of a

command economy. Breaking with the instinct to command has proved phenomenally hard, as much in societies which apparently want to break out, such as Poland and Hungary, as in those which are still far from the democratic threshold, such as Romania.

In the Soviet Union, nobody might once have doubted the sincerity of President Gorbachev in his desire to move away from the centralism inherited from Stalin. Yet what is to be made of his apparent shift back, towards the "law and order" lobbies, the hawks of the army and the KGB? And what of his demand for greater formal powers than even Stalin possessed? Does it presage a return to dictatorship? He denies it, but Mr Shevardnadze apparently disagrees. Whom to believe? Even a provisional answer must depend on what Mr Gorbachev means by restoring order, what forces he enlists, what methods he chooses and what he does when – and if – he succeeds.

Mr Gorbachev's two tasks are to keep the Soviet Union's myriad ethnic groups apart and to move his stalled economy into market mode before the hardliners decide the time has come to move it back in command mode. He has the battalions if not the Soviet army, which is having trouble merely shipping home its troops from Europe, then the KGB and interior ministry troops. But to deploy them courts violent rebellion, which would not only increase economic chaos but destroy his chances of reshaping the Union into a popularly supported confederation of semi-independent republics.

Only if he uses the powers at his command to force the pace towards political and economic freedom will the Soviet people regard Mr Gorbachev as the harbinger of hope. For whatever purpose he seeks them, the powers he now demands over the fledgling institutions of Soviet democracy are unashamedly Stalinist. They could be exercised by others, others who wish to mimic China in turning the clock back, to freeze time. Dictatorship is an *ism* that will never die. It is the original sin of politics. Mr Shevardnadze may optimistically insist that a dictator could not now succeed in the Soviet Union, that "the future belongs to democracy and freedom". But did anyone hear Stalin's ghost chuckle in the Kremlin corridors?

WHO FOOLS WHOM?

So who should be the man of 1990? The BBC shot itself uncomfortably in the foot yesterday by admitting that another corporation advance into tabloid broadcasting had gone sadly wrong. Voters in the *Today* radio programme's "man and woman of the year" competition had selected a leading Hindu politician as top man. Public relations experts know well that few listeners bother to vote in these contests, votes numbering only a few hundred. A well-orchestrated campaign can secure marvellous publicity from Britain's leading talk channel, which says it does not take advertising but, as every PR person knows, merely declines to charge it.

For years, the same technique has been used by both political parties for getting their leaders "chosen". Local Conservative associations have ensured that Mrs Thatcher has regularly topped the woman of the year ratings. But this year (the Soviet embassy being too preoccupied to organise for Mikhail Gorbachev) first in the ballot was none other than Lal Krishan Advani, the Indian politician who heads the country's chauvinist Hindu Bharatiya Janata party. Mr Advani is famous in South Yorkshire's Hindu community, but the gilded souls of Broadcasting House responded to his massive vote with a collective "Who he?"

The mistake of Mr Advani's admirers was to fail to polish their PR. The method normally used to win this competition involves supporters being told to send votes in their own hand, as if spontaneously reacting to the daily pleas of the show's presenters. Mr Advani's supporters most unfortunately used standard letters. They also forgot, or never knew, the elementary precaution of using a number of

widely scattered post offices. Most postmarks were from Yorkshire.

The BBC seized on these lapses, accused Mr Advani's supporters of offending against "the spirit" of the competition, said he had not won after all and threw him off the winner's podium – for all the world as if they had found steroids in his urine. No such charges were brought against Mrs Thatcher, nor will they be brought against whichever British politician may now be promoted from second to first place.

The BBC has long offered free promotion to products pushed by the publishing and entertainment industries, though any mention of less fashionable goods or services, let alone of manufacturing industry, is fiercely censored as "advertising". Politics is normally considered acceptable, though minority points of view undoubtedly feel excluded by the big guns.

The Hindus thought they were doing no more than playing honestly at a good old British sport: conning a plug out of the Beeb. Getting their hero voted "man of the year" was surely better than rioting in the streets or making a nuisance in the House of Commons. But they reckoned without the British establishment at bay. Men and women of the year, bluntly, must come from a certain class, colour and group. No way do Hindu militants count.

The BBC should either declare Mr Advani the winner of this ridiculous competition, or admit that everybody has always cheated, abandon the competition and leave such nonsense to the tabloid press. The corporation has managed to fall foul of racism, chauvinism, commercialism – and Tory favouritism. And none of its producers even got an honour!

PRAGMATIC THATCHERITE

The death of Michael Oakeshott this week at the age of 89, so soon after the departure of the prime minister whose views owed so much to his, merits more than a passing obituary. He was nothing less than the chief reanimator of conservatism after the long dominance of socialism over political theory in 20th-century Britain.

Oakeshott was a thinker broadly hostile to theory. His first widely noticed work was an essay fiercely critical of rationalism in politics which came out in 1947. By rationalism he meant an attitude to politics which called for a body of abstract theory to supply the connections required to achieve given ends by given means. He saw politics as the skill of protecting, and adjusting customary modes of behaviour, learnt by experience and nourished by knowledge of history. As such, politics cannot be summed up in a set of principles like the instructions for assembling a television aerial.

"In political activity," he wrote, "men sail a boundless and bottomless sea; there is neither harbour nor shelter nor floor nor anchorage, neither starting place nor appointed destination. The enterprise is to keep afloat on an even keel... seamanship consists in using the resources of a traditional manner of behaviour in order to make a friend of every hostile on the occasion." There was naturally a star in the academic world when, in 1951, Oakeshott succeeded Laski, the noted champion of abstract rationalism in politics, as professor of political science at the London School of Economics.

Oakeshott's Burkean emphasis on continuity set him at some distance from Margaret Thatcher. She has always been consciously Thatcher. She has always been consciously radical, determined to sweep away the indurated and socially enfeebled practices of the trade unions, the Foreign Office (by the resisting aggression and not appeasing it), the education establishment, the health pro-

fessions, the lawyers and other sectional groups. Yet there was a convergence between them. Oakeshott insisted that the proper role of the state is not to protect the interests of individuals as such but to ensure that they, and the social groups in which they naturally and freely associate, can pursue their own purposes with a minimum of frustration. In this sense, both favoured a strong state, but one with limited agenda.

A less obvious service Oakeshott performed for conservatism was to make it more intellectually attractive than it had been for a long time, certainly since the days of the fourth Marquis of Salisbury. In the first half of the century there had been some notable, if not notably successful, conservative practitioners, Balfour and Baldwin for example. Doctrine was purveyed by archaic eminences such as Lord Hugh Cecil and Lord Hailsham. Oakeshott's conservatism was sophisticated and elegantly expressed, not the reiteration, however forceful, of conventional pieties.

Mrs Thatcher might seem closer to Hayek than to Oakeshott, who was less concerned than either with market economics and the pursuit of wealth. But where Hayek, in the spirit of classic liberalism, criticised central planning and the omnicompetent state on a global scale, Mrs Thatcher and Oakeshott had more a confined and local scope. The rights and interests that concerned them are the rights enjoyed and the interests pursued by the British people, as a result of a long and unique historical process.

Oakeshott's contribution to the conservative revival was thus to make its liberalism truly "conservative", to imply a planing of the rough edges from Thatcherism's radical agenda. Rarely are philosophers also architects of politics, but Oakeshott can safely claim his place in postwar political history.

All at sea over shipping industry

From the President of the General Council of British Shipping

Sir, David Lipsey's views ("Save our ships", December 19), as always, make interesting reading. But it is wrong to suppose that because ships can be easily hired in peacetime, the rest of the world will flock to offer their services to us when the shooting starts.

The first lift of the Seventh Armoured Brigade to the Gulf was largely made in foreign ships because they were available for hire when most of our own were fully committed to their customers. Were the shooting to start, the situation would be quite different. Not only would our vessels be available, but other fleets would. I suspect, disappear like snowflakes on a hot day.

As Mr Lipsey properly reminds us, the Indian government would not let its nationals go to the Falklands in 1982. Good and willing seafarers had to be put ashore and replaced by Brits. It is a truism that the only people on whom we can totally rely are our own.

No one is asking for "an entire merchant fleet" to be supported "just in case every decade or two a ship might come in handy". For example, should Nato ever need to reinforce Europe in a hurry, almost every sophisticated ship we and our Allies possess would be pressed into service. Far from talking about the "odd ship", we are talking about the only transport arm capable of carrying the vast equipment and stores of modern armies across the seas. And the penalties for failure can be very high.

Finally, David Lipsey's entrepreneur quietly preparing himself to reinvest in the industry,

Future of Gatt

From Mr W. P. Niven

Sir, In his "Economic View" article (December 10) Anatole Kaletsky accuses Ray MacSharry, the European agricultural commissioner, of scuppering the Gatt talks in Brussels. Prepared statements by the US trade representative, Carla Hills, and the Cairns group join *The Times* chorus of blaming the EC for the collapse of these important talks.

Whilst I would agree that an economic trade war with America is certainly not in the EC's best interests, Mr Kaletsky's attack on Community farmers in general and cereal producers in particular is wholly unjustified.

True the CAP (common agricultural policy) in its current form has to be amended and this the Commission is doing. However, the failure of these talks is, in my view, due in part to the US and others putting forward proposals which they knew full well were unacceptable by the EC Council and in reality were aimed at dismantling and even destroying the mechanism of the CAP whilst maintaining their own internal support.

How many of your readers realise that it is the Americans' main interest to ensure that their

Rights to roam the countryside

From Mr Michael Harwood

Sir, Both the title and content of your leader ("Rights of trespass", December 12), arising from the proposed prosecution of a Wiltshire farmer for obstructing a public footpath, give a distorted picture of the claims of walkers.

First, it is not just a "few" farmers who have shown a "cavaliere" attitude to public footpaths. In recent years, footpaths have not been "actively defended and even extended" by those with legal responsibility. Quite the reverse.

Definitive maps show a network of some 140,000 miles of public footpaths. They may pass through farmland; but the farmer does not own them. They are as much a property right as the farmer's private property right in his land. And yet a detailed survey in 1988 by the Countryside Commission showed that a "family on a typical two-mile footpath walk... face a two in three chance of meeting an impassable obstruction".

This represents mass trespass by the farming fraternity on a grand scale. If public footpath rights had been respected by farmers in the past, usage of the national network by walkers might have been more dispersed, and today erosion of the relatively few overused paths might not be such a problem.

Secondly, walkers are not claiming "completely open access to farmland", but to be allowed to walk at large on uncultivated hills and moorland. Such access would not affect farming. It might affect to some extent the proprietor's sporting rights of a small number of wealthy people. But does a sensible European policy require a healthy workforce or a grouse mountain?

Yours faithfully,
MICHAEL HARWOOD,
Leeds Business School,
Leeds Polytechnic,
Vernon Road,
Leeds, West Yorkshire.
December 14.

From Mr Nicholas Lane

Sir, As a Country Landowners Association (CLA) member, I accept the law as it is in the Rights of Way Act 1990, and would want to encourage public access to the countryside along the definitive paths that have been there since the Enclosure Act.

But is this Wiltshire County Council prosecution just a little one-sided? While we, as farmers and landowners, understand our duties and responsibilities, it is laid down within the Rights of Way Act 1990

that the Highways Authority of the County Councils shall keep all paths clear from vegetation growing from the surface other than crops, that they shall signpost and waymark the rights of way, and this includes a duty to provide signposts where paths leave the metalled road, and waymarks where the Authority thinks it is necessary to help anyone unfamiliar with the locality to follow the route.

As a farmer and landowner, I warmly endorse this, but I do believe many county councils, my own in Norfolk in particular, have not carried out their duties. Furthermore, is a county council even equipped to deal with keeping the paths and surfaces in good repair?

Yours faithfully,
VERE C. JAMES

Glenwood House Cottage,
Long Burton,
Sherborne, Dorset.

December 13.

Court procedure

From Mr Christopher Ash

Sir, Professor Prais (December 18) makes two unrelated points: in the first he queries the asinine habit of being asked to appear at court as a witness before the doors to the building are unlocked, and, in the second, he questions why the magistrate refused to allow a defence witness to give evidence because he had been present in court.

The answer to the first is, indifference, and to the second, incompetence. Courts are run for the benefit of the Lord Chancellor's department, not witnesses – let alone defendants.

Yours helpfully,

CHRISTOPHER ASH,
Wensum Chambers,
10a Wensum Street,
Norwich, Norfolk.

December 15.

Road congestion

From Mr Frank West-Oram

Sir, Mr J. B. Robinson's proposal (December 14) to raise the motorway speed limit to 90mph – to reduce congestion – ignores safety considerations and is apparently based on motoring folklore rather than on fundamental principles.

What is needed to increase occupancy of the first lane is effective enforcement of the existing 70mph limit or of a lower limit as in enlightened countries such as Denmark, Japan and the USA.

This would minimise overtaking and thereby ensure that all lanes were utilised effectively, also improve safety with perfectly adequate mobility and give the bonus of reduced emissions.

Yours faithfully,

FRANK WEST-ORAM,
161 Chester Road,
Northwich,
Cheshire.

December 15.

Wanted: organisers

From Dr K. F. Mole

Sir, The Reverend Edward Underhill (December 13) is in harmony with organisers. I left my last job as organist because of Sunday slavery. My new job at All Saints, Kington Magna, Dorset, involves three or four services a month. Three other churches in neighbouring villages keep our vicar fully occupied and three other part-time organisers lucky to have an instrument to play on.

Yours etc.,

NICOLAS WALTER,
Rationalist Press Association Ltd,
88 Islington High Street, N1.

From Mr Stephen Colloff

Sir, If Sunday trading were to be de-restricted we would become one of the most uncivilised countries in Europe in our failure to observe a day of rest.

The government should present a new bill rationalising the present inconsistencies and, as in Germany, making provision for special licences for one or two Sunday openings a year before holidays such as Christmas.

Yours faithfully,

S. P. COLLOFF,
The Old Post,
Lipson, Berkshire.

December 18.

Age discrimination

From Mr Jeremy Paxman

Sir, The ageism of the Lord Chancellor's department (John Stanley's letter, December 12) is curiously discriminatory. Ordinary members of the public are considered too old to sit on a jury over the age of 70. High Court judges can continue to sit on the bench until they are 75.

Yours etc.,

JEREMY PAXMAN,
c/o David Higham Associates,
5-12 Lower John Street,
Golden Square, W1.



COURT CIRCULAR

SANDRINGHAM December 21: The Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh visited the Queen's Flight at Royal Air Force Benson today.

Her Majesty and His Royal Highness arrived in an Avro of the Queen's Flight (Group Captain Michael Harrington) and were received by Air Commodore the Hon. Timothy Elwes (Captain of the Queen's Flight).

The Queen and The Duke of Edinburgh viewed displays on the history of the Avro aircraft and, escorted by Professor Roland Smith (Chairman, British Aerospace PLC), viewed the new Bae 146 aircraft.

Her Majesty and His Royal Highness subsequently left Royal Air Force Benson in a Bae 146 aircraft of The Queen's Flight for Royal Air Force Marham.

Birthdays

TODAY: Air Chief Marshal Sir John Aiken, 69; Dame Peggy Ashcroft, actress, 83; Mr James Burke, broadcaster, 83; Dr Alan Bush, composer, conductor and pianist, 90; Viscount Davidson, 62; Mr Noel Edmunds, broadcaster, 42; Mr Maurice Gibb and Mr Robin Gibb, singers, 41; Miss Patricia Hayes, actress, 81; Mrs Sir Michael Jackson, sculptor, 76; Mr Vice-Marshal Sir Edward Lowe, 83; Dr Judith McClure, headmistress, The Royal School, Bath, 45; Mr Trevor Alfred Morris, former chief constable, Hertfordshire, 56; Mr Chris Old, cricketer, 42; the Rev Lord Sandford, 70; Lord Stott, 81; the Duke of Westminster, 39; Colonel W.H. Whitbread, brewer, 90; Mr Ken Whitmore, playwright, 51; the Very Rev J.H.S. Wild, former Dean of Durham, 86.

TOMORROW: Mr Michele Alboreto, racing driver, 34; the Earl of Balfour, 63; Lord Banton, 68; Mrs C. Becken, former chairman, Victoria Health Authority, 71; Sir Alan Biggs, banker, 83; Lord Blake, 74; Vice-Admiral Sir Stephen Carrill, 83; Professor Sir Theo Crawford, pathologist, 79; Mr Peter Davis, chairman, Reed International, 49; Mr Maurice Denham, actor, 81; Sir Colin Fielding, civil servant, 64; Mr D.G. Justham, chairman, Central Independent Television, 67; Mr Yousaf Karsh, photographer, 82; Mr Graham Kelly, chief executive, Football Association, 45; Professor Peter Lachmann, president, Royal College of Pathologists, 59; Mr Christopher Lawrence, silversmith, 54; Brigadier Sir Geoffrey Macnab, 91; Miss J.M. Quennell, former MP, 67; Mr Ashley Raeburn, former chair-

The Right Hon Sir Robert Fellowes and Wing Commander David Walker, RAF were in attendance.

KENSINGTON PALACE

December 21: The Prince of Wales received Mr Magnus Magnusson (Chairman) and Dr John Francis (Chief Executive) of the National Conservancy Council for Scotland, at St James's Palace.

His Royal Highness received Professor Eric Lathwaite at St James's Palace.

The Prince of Wales left Heathrow Airport, London this evening for a visit to British Military Units in Saudi Arabia.

Major-General Sir Christopher Airey and Commander Richard Aylard, RN are in attendance.

The Emperor of Japan celebrates his birthday tomorrow.

man, Boosey and Hawkes, 72; Herr Helmut Schmidt, former chancellor, Federal Republic of Germany, 72; Mr Christopher Turner, former headmaster, Stowe School, 61; Mr R.S. Unwin, publisher, 65; the Marquess of Winchester, 49.

Anniversaries

TODAY: Birds, John Crome, landscape painter, Norwich, 1768; Jean Henri Fabre, naturalist, Saint-Étienne, France, 1823; Giacomo Puccini, composer, Lucca, Italy, 1858; Edgar Varèse, composer, Paris, 1883.

Deaths: Duc de Sully, soldier and statesman, Villebon, France, 1641; George Eliot, novelist, London, 1880; Richard and Kraft-Ebing, neuro-psychiatrist, Vienna, 1902; Beatrix Potter, children's writer, Sawrey, Lancs, 1943; Harry Langdale, comedian, The Silent Film Comedians, 1944.

Michael Joseph Oakeshott was born the son of Joseph Oakeshott, a prominent Fabian socialist, and educated at a progressive co-educational school, St George's, Harpenden. He was sometimes supposed to have reacted radically against this background in becoming a conservative, but in fact there remained in Michael Oakeshott more than a streak of his Victorian socialist inheritance; if nothing of the Fabian *dirigiste* sort, there was something of William Morris's anarchism even in his Toryism and there was even more of the pre-Raphaelite poet in his personality and his way of life. Among the great ones of the past whom he looked up to intellectually were the mentally and spiritually bold — men as different as Benvenuto Cellini, the extrovert sculptor and goldsmith of scandalous and brawling life, and the unworldly mystic St John of the Cross.

He went up to Cambridge as an undergraduate at Gonville and Caius College, and stayed on as a history don for more than 20 years. History led him to historiography, and historiography to philosophy.

Oakeshott's philosophy, however,

was not the empiricist kind which Bertrand Russell had made fashionable, but was closer (again reverting to the 19th century) to the idealist tradition which Benedetto Croce was keeping alive in Italy and R. G. Collingwood in Oxford. Oakeshott's first book *Experience and its Modes*, which appeared in 1934, set out a theory of knowledge sharply at odds with the prevailing positivist doctrine.

Experience and its Modes was an important restatement of the cardinal principles of absolute idealism ex-

pounded with all Oakeshott's moral

and intellectual sincerity and under-

lined by his profound knowledge of

the history of philosophy. It was

coolly received in 1933 and took 33

years to sell out a first edition of 1,000

copies. The author nevertheless lived to see it hailed as a small masterpiece,

fusing an idealist epistemology with a

profoundly sceptical metaphysics.

Oakeshott asserted his individuality again in 1936 when he published a book (with a colleague, G. T. Griffith) entitled *A Guide to the Classics*. This turned out to be concerned not with the literature of the ancient world, as was at first widely assumed by many a master in the classics sixth forms around the country, but with the turf, giving readers advice on picking the Derby winner. It earned the author a black mark in puritan Cambridge, all of which appealed considerably to Oakeshott's sense of humour. How-

ever, the two dons were a trifle crestfallen that their *Guide*, which

OBITUARIES

MICHAEL OAKESHOTT

Michael Oakeshott, political philosopher, fellow of Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge, and professor emeritus, University of London, died on December 18 at his home in Dorset aged 89. He was born on December 11, 1901.

MICHAEL Oakeshott was one of the few outstanding political philosophers of the 20th century. The impact of his thinking was felt not only in academic circles, but in the world of politics. Rather as T. H. Green, the Oxford idealist philosopher, helped to transform liberal opinion at the turn of the century away from the old ideal of liberty towards new designs of social reform, Oakeshott did much in his lifetime to turn conservative opinion away from social planning and back to personal responsibility and freedom. Paradoxically, he always insisted that he had no message, that political theory could offer no guidance in political practice, and that all his writings were intended only as contributions to scholarship.

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Experience and its Modes was an important restatement of the cardinal principles of absolute idealism ex-



plained their considerable analytical powers to the problem of predicting the performance of horseflesh through a rigorous survey of breeding and two-year-old form, did not sell well. Certainly its appearance broke no bookmakers' hearts, notwithstanding that it went into a second edition after the war, in 1947.

Oakeshott's next book was an altogether more serious one, *Social and Political Doctrines of Contemporary Europe*, written at the suggestion of Sir Ernest Barker, who wanted Oakeshott to succeed him in the chair of political science. During the war Oakeshott enlisted in the ranks as a gunner and rose to be an officer in the intelligence, serving in "Phantom", a unit whose function was to observe and report back to the guns the effectiveness of their barrages. War kept him away from Cambridge for five years.

When he returned he became editor of *The Cambridge Journal* and contributed several essays which made clear the nature of his conservatism: it owed less to Hegel than to David Hume and Montaigne, with Oakeshott resting his head, as they did, on the pillow of doubt, and believing in custom, habit and tradition because there was nothing else to believe in.

When Barker's chair at Cambridge went to a popular historian from Oxford, Oakeshott left to become Professor of Political Science at the LSE, an institution his father had helped to found, and which had long had a reputation for being left-wing. Richard Crossman and others protested at a chair once dignified by such socialists as Graham Wallas and Harold Laski being given to a conservative, and Oakeshott himself, in an inaugural lecture of characteristic urbanity, admitted "it seems perhaps a little ungrateful that Professor Wallas and Professor Laski should

be followed by a sceptic". He started many by the measure of his scepticism. "In political activity," he said, "there is neither harbour for shelter nor floor for anchorage; neither starting-place nor appointed destination. The enterprise is to keep afloat." Defining a political ideology as something which "purports to supply in advance knowledge of what freedom or democracy or justice is, and in this manner sets empiricism to work", Oakeshott then rounded on this conception of politics as being erroneous as well as pernicious. "Political activity," he declared, "comes first and a political ideology follows."

Oakeshott's career at the LSE was, however, a marked success because he made it clear from the start that it was not going to preach conservatism as Laski had preached socialism: he intended to promote academic work and academic standards, which he did with a grim determination and brisk efficiency half-hidden by a mask of bohemian bohemia. He published little during his 18 years at the LSE: a short essay on aesthetics and a series of essays collected under the title *Rationalism in Politics* (1962). He became more productive after his retirement in 1969, an event marked by the publication of a *Festschrift* he did not much care for. His later books — notably *Of Human Conduct*, published when he was 74, and *On History*, which came out when he was 82 — were as beautifully written as everything he produced, and in their elegant, devious way, more constructive and more deeply philosophical than his earlier writings. Observant readers noticed how words such as "habit", "custom" and "tradition", which were central to his earlier writings, gave way to such concepts as "reflection", "consciousness" and "intelligence". At the same time Oakeshott returned continually to the central theme of all his work:

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Oakeshott refused public honours and honorary doctorates from several universities, but he did accept, when pressed by former pupils, honorary doctorates from Colorado, Durham and Hull. In 1978 on the eve of Mrs Thatcher's first electoral victory there appeared a volume of *Conservative Essays*, edited by Maurice Cowling, in which the influence of Oakeshott was pronounced, but Oakeshott himself stood fastidiously aside from all party politics. "Conservatism", he wrote, "is the name not of a creed or doctrine, but a disposition." In the preface to one of his later books, *Of Human Conduct*, Oakeshott wrote:

"When I look back upon the path my footprints make in the snow, I wish that it might have been less rambling." And yet this was only half an apology, for in the same essay he said of philosophical reflection, what he had once said of politics, "it is an intellectual adventure which has a course to follow, but no destination."

His last book, *The Voice of Liberal Learning*, which appeared only last year, contained nothing to suggest that Oakeshott had strayed far from this position, either as regards politics or experience in general.

Nevertheless, more than anybody else Michael Oakeshott articulated the real philosophical foundations of Mrs Thatcher's policies. Yet he had no direct influence on her and she was disposed to consider him irrelevant for her purposes because unlike Hayek, he made no practical recommendations.

But it was Oakeshott in the late 1940s who explained the Conservative's opposition to socialism and corporatism and influenced many generations of students and readers who became supporters of Mrs Thatcher. He warned that a managerial society "is kept going by promiscuous day to day interventions", by "the exercise of the kind of power most subject to misuse and corruption". He emphasised that the foundation of English liberties was "the absence of overwhelming concentrations of power such as the trades unions".

Private property and competition were clearly essential because "to replace by political control the integration of activity which competition (the market) provides is at once to create a monopoly and to destroy the diffusion of power inseparable from freedom".

He strongly opposed the view that society is a productive enterprise which the economic emphasis in Mrs Thatcher's rhetoric sometimes implied. Oakeshott's vision of society was as "a multitude of interests, activities and organisations" contained within a civil association held together by the rule of law and by the habits, traditions and loyalties inherited from the nation's past.

For the same reason he saw education as an initiation into the art of civilised living and distinguished it sharply from vocational training. Although he respected and recommended vocational training, the notion that education is a means to industrial efficiency he regarded as fit only for a slavish society. He was as firm as Mrs Thatcher about the basic views on competition and patriotism but his larger vision produced a less abrasive impression.

He leaves his widow, Christel, and a son from a previous marriage.

JOHN MAHONY

John Keeler (Jack Mahony, who was one of the last four surviving Canadian winners of the Victoria Cross, died in hospital at London, Ontario, on December 15 aged 79. He was born on June 30, 1911.

JACK Mahony won the VC for gallantry at the crossing of the Melfa River in southern Italy on May 24, 1944. King George VI pinned the medal on him in July of the same year. A major at the time, Mahony commanded a company that was ordered to establish a bridgehead on the east bank of the Melfa, against a strong defending force of German infantry supported by tanks and self-propelled guns. The crossing was made "in full view of and under heavy fire from enemy machine-guns posts", his citation said.

Twice the Germans launched tank-led counter-attacks and twice they were beaten back, with heavy losses on both sides. At one stage in the second attack, a Canadian section was pinned down in the open by accurate and intense enemy fire. Major Mahony crawled forward to the beleaguered troops' position and, by throwing smoke grenades, managed to extricate the section. Though wounded in the head and twice wounded in the leg, he continued to direct the defence of the bridgehead, disregarding the extreme pain he was suffering. Only when the rest of the regiment had crossed the river did he allow his wounds to be dressed.

Establishment of the bridgehead was vital to the whole Canadian corps action, the



citation said. "The great courage shown by Major Mahony in this action will forever be an inspiration to his regiment and to the Canadian army."

Mahony was a reporter for *The Province*, a Vancouver newspaper, which he joined after graduating from high school in nearby New Westminster. In the same period he was also a member of the Canadian militia (reserve army). He remained in the army for 17 years after the war ended in 1945, serving in various parts of Canada. He also was Canadian army liaison officer in Washington for a time in the 1950s. He retired as a lieutenant-colonel in 1962. With his death the number of living Canadian VC winners is reduced to three — all from the second world war.

Mahony is survived by his wife, Bonnie, and two daughters.

Archaeology

Kaya kings' tombs uncovered

<p

Home from home: John and Gillian Carey

Fruits of a little country living

John Carey, literary critic and Merton professor of English literature at Oxford university, and his wife Gillian, senior tutor at Manchester college, left their home in Oxford last Saturday and half an hour later were collecting eggs and vegetables from the local farm while their two sons, Leo, aged 16, and Thomas, 13, put up the Christmas tree in their village house in the Cotswolds.

The Careys bought the house when they were expecting Leo, and moved into it shortly after he was born. They spend nearly every weekend, Christmas, Easter and most of the summer holidays there. Sometimes they go during the week, when Professor Carey has writing to do or they have examination scripts to mark. "John does so much work at home. I thought it would be good for him to have somewhere different and very peaceful in which to work," Mrs Carey says.

There are bees at the bottom of Professor Carey's garden, 120,000 in three hives, which necessitate some of his commuting. "As it's so near, I can come over on a summer evening to look at them."

There is also a stream. "Our previous cat was constantly catching shrews and mice," he says, "which the boys would rescue and release on the other side of the stream out of the cat's clutches."

There are wrens and robins, and a woodpecker that comes every winter. Ancestors of their resident swallows held up the restoration of the cottage. "It is considered bad luck to disturb a swallow's nest, so the builders wouldn't touch the outside until they'd flown," Mrs Carey says.

They bought the house as two derelict 18th century stone cottages, each with its own earth closet and wash

house. "We bought it at auction for £11,000, which we thought was a fortune, and borrowed from everyone to do so," Professor Carey says. Now the wash houses are a rather superior shed, "the nicest bit of the cottage, with their original Stonesfield slate roof". The sitting room, once the entire ground floor of one of the cottages, has a wing chair and a chesterfield in front of the fire, and an oak settle, inscribed 1736, along the wall. On the whole, the Careys say they have tried to furnish the cottage with pieces appropriate to the 18th century. They have put shutters back inside the windows and wainscoting along the walls.

However, they are not purists. A space-age bathroom superseded the earth closets. "I insisted on a whirlpool bath," Thomas says. Modern bathrooms are one thing, commercialising country rural communities is another.

Lyneham is a time-stood still village. Most of its residents farm or work in the area. For the past two years Professor Carey has been campaigning, along with the rest of the village, against a proposal to develop 144 acres of agricultural land adjoining the village as an 18-hole golf course.

The community's reaction to the proposal, which began as a golf course and grew to include a 30 bedroom hotel, was to form *Slam - Save Lyneham Action Movement* - on whose committee Professor Carey sits. So far they have been successful in having applications for the clubhouse and driving range rejected by the council, but they anxiously await the results of the appeal lodged by the developer.

"Although it's only half an hour away, the village seems like another world," Professor Carey says. "When we first

Farmer's diary: Paul Heiney

No rest for this merry gentleman

I HOPE the vicar didn't notice, but during the carol service the other night I was shifting as nervously as a troubled schoolboy. It was simply that the carols struck home in a way they never had in the days before I became a farmer. In nearly every hymn, a verse or a phrase set me off on an anxious train of thought, each one leading back to the farmyard.

No sooner had the boy soprano cut the air with his "Once in royal..." than we arrived at the lowly cattle shed. As the proud owner of several cattle sheds of the most lowly state imaginable, I did not find any comfort in being reminded of the work, and money, needed to keep them standing until next Christmas. As for "Where a



mother laid her baby/In a manger for a bed...", it suddenly came to me that it was in the woodworm-ridden old cattle manger that I had left the spare breast for the plough. I've been looking for that for a week. Ah, the plough! It was a tradition in these eastern parts that good ploughmen should have turned all their land by Christmas Day, and to bring them luck for the following year, they would sleep on Christmas Eve with the breast of the plough beneath their beds. The congregation had reached "And our eyes at last shall see him..." by the time I had been through all the parcels of land that was still unploughed. If I'm in bed with the plough by Easter I shall be lucky. Feeling weak at the thought, I was glad when the vicar asked us to be seated.

But there was no rest. One lesson later "In the Bleak Midwinter" was announced, and the organist attacked the opening notes with an enthusiasm that suggested he hadn't been forking 20 loads of horse-muck that morning. . . . Earth stood hard as iron, water like a stone." I shuddered - a mighty dread had filled my troubled mind. In a big freeze-up, which is bound to come some time, gallons of drinking water will have to be carried bucket by bucket from house to farmyard. It comes to us via an electric pump in a well and if the power lines are down I shall be the one who has to tell the thirsty horses, cows, pigs and piglets that water is like a stone. Peace and goodwill will soon evaporate

in an unseasonal display of foot-stamping and snorting.

"We three kings..." intoned the vicar. Not much better. To be truthful, I've had a bellyful of wise men out of the east. I suspect there is a roving pack of retired farmworkers who hum me down, not to dispense wisdom, but merely to hamper and undermine me. They stand watching me plough, and ignore the straight and neat furrows, but remark when one of them is less than perfect. "My old dad, he'd say that look like a dog's piddle in the snow..." they declare, and burst into a laugh so deep that you know it is coming from the heart. Then you plough a near perfect furrow, but they won't say anything about that one.

Our next hymn was "It Came Upon a Midnight Clear". My ranging mind swung towards Alice, our sow, who is due her second litter on New Year's Eve. I know she will have them at midnight because it was at that time she started when her first litter was born. Except that was in June, when a midnight dash to check the sty was quite pleasant. If things

are going to get deep and crisp and even, Alice may have to improvise. I have already intimated that there is ample precedent for mothers having to manage when there is no crib for a bed and I think Alice has got the message - I caught her shunting straw into corners yesterday.

"THE cattle are lowing..." sang the choir. Of course they are. The bull arrived last week and his presence has put my maiden heifers completely off their food. When once I used to issue a coarse, rasping "moo" towards feeding time, they now moan a seductive melody which leads me to believe there will be little trouble from them this Christmas.

Heartened by that thought, the Christmas spirit briefly wafted over me. Even when the soloist rose to sing the "Boar's Head Carol" I didn't allow the thought of a freezer full of unsold pork joints to distract me.

Then we sang "While shepherds watched..." and I remembered the bawdry on the electric fence. It is flat and the flock will be roaming. God rest ye merry gentlemen? Some hope.



ELUNED PRICE Weekend retreat: John and Gillian Carey with sons Leo and Thomas make the most of the garden at their second home in the Cotswold village of Lyneham

Some people spend all their lives believing in Father Christmas.

To many people with a mental handicap we are Father Christmas. At MENCAP we're working all year round to help people lead happy and fulfilled lives. As well as making every Christmas their best Christmas we help them with things like training, housing and employment opportunities. With a donation from you, we'll be able to continue being Father Christmas to all of them. Please send a donation to Mencap, Freepost, London EC1B 1AA.



● JANUARY Boom: Sotheby's unveils Renoir's *Au Moulin de la Galette*. The painting, of weekend revellers at Montmartre, they say, may break the world record of \$53 million (£30.2 million) for art. Christie's announces slightly less ambitious plans to sell Van Gogh's *Dr Gachet*, a portrait of the tragic artist's homeopathic doctor, at an estimated £22 million.

Gloom: A Bernini bust of Pope Gregory XV fails not only to break the world record for a sculpture but to sell at all, at Christie's New York, in the first disaster of the season. The estimate, of \$7 million, is scorned (retrospectively) as being too ambitious. Meanwhile, Alan Bond, the Australian entrepreneur who paid that \$53.9 million in 1987 for Van Gogh's painting *Iris* (only for it to emerge later that Sotheby's had loaned half the money), admits he will sell for the "right price".

FEBRUARY Boom: Citibank expands its art buying facilities into Europe, encouraging owners to use their collections as collateral. Sotheby's has its best minor Impressionist sale in London, at £3.53 million with 12 per cent unsold.

MARCH Boom: British artist Stanley Spencer hits the big time when his *Resurrection: Waking up* sells for £770,000 at Christie's to Bernard Jacobson, the London dealer. The same sale has records for Gwen John (£18,500) and L.S. Lowry (£104,500), leading to

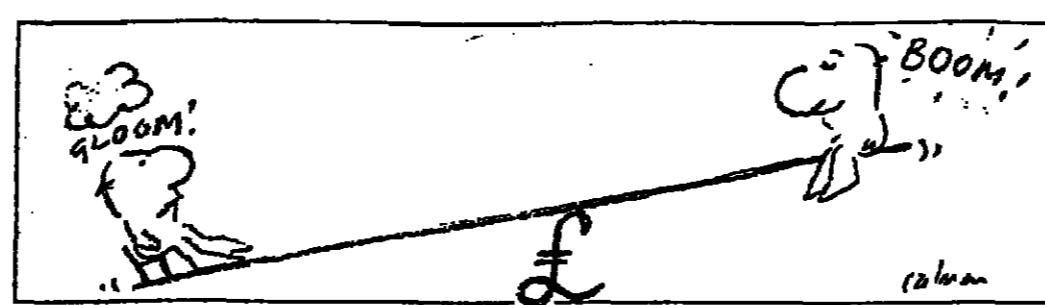
How art took a hammering

speculation that British painting is at last catching up.

J.M.W. Turner's watercolour of Hampton Court Palace raises a record £473,000, and a 15th century Ming bowl breaks previous prices for Chinese porcelain at £815,000. Christie's Hong Kong. The market, according to the expert Colin Sheaf, is "red hot" and fuelled with Japanese and Taiwanese money. "They've got a lot of money and they are learning how to collect." Other records include £7.3 million for Modigliani in Paris, and £1.76 million for two bathing beauties by Anders Zorn in London.

Gloom: Alan Bond sells *Iris* to the Getty Museum in a deal which is said to have lost him money. None of the parties concerned — Sotheby's, the Getty and Mr Bond — will discuss the price.

APRIL Gloom: Unprecedented failure rate for the London Impressionist sales. The total of £37.6 million for Sotheby's Part I sale compares with £68.8 million for the equivalent sale last year. A dossier purporting to prove the murder of the Russian imperial family at the hands of revolutionaries also goes unsold at Sotheby's London, in spite of an estimate of £500,000. But a



disastrous sale of Russian avant-garde paintings at Sotheby's, with 76 per cent unsold, is followed by an outstanding success for similar material at Christie's.

Now, Sotheby's gets more flak after announcing that it has become dealers to 2,300 paintings, valued at \$300 million (£187.5 million) from the Pierre Matisse gallery in New York. The plan is to sell them both at auction and privately. Anger from the trade, which says auctioneers should be agents, not principals.

MAY Boom: Stanley Spencer's record soars to £1.3 million for *The Crucifixion* at Sotheby's. Records include the £1.15 million for English silver, and £3.6 million for Pop art when *Kiss II*, a Roy Lichtenstein cartoon image,

sells to a Japanese industrialist in New York. The Christie's New York auction includes ten records for individual artists, but cracks are appearing with 26 out of 77 lots unsold. Van Gogh's *Dr Gachet* smashes the world record for any art work at Christie's New York, selling to the Japanese paper manufacturer Ryoei Saito for £49.7 million. Two nights later, Mr Saito instructs his dealer to pay up to \$100 million for Renoir's *Au Moulin de la Galette*.

He clinches it at £46 million, creating a supersonic price structure for supremely desirable art works, and further confusing the market.

June: The London dealer Leslie Waddington attacks auctioneers for "insanely" high estimates on the contemporary sales. "The

estimates are 50 per cent above my retail prices," he says.

Gloom: No buyers for *St Peter in Prison*, the first fully accepted Rembrandt to come on the market since 1986.

JUNE Boom: Record for a pink diamond when the Agra, reputed to have glinted from the turban of the 16th century Mogul emperor Babur, sells for £4.07 million (three times estimate) at Christie's. Lord Leighton's painting *Dante in Exile* just misses the world record for a Victorian painting when it is bought at Sotheby's by Andrew Lloyd Webber for £1.1 million. Buddy Holly's black plastic glasses fetch £26,529; a painting, *Boutique Fantastique*, raises the record for the Englishman Ben Nicholson to £1.21 million at Christie's.

July: The London dealer Hans Hoffmann, fails to sell. The painting, estimated at £2 to £3 million, was guaranteed, which means Sotheby's has to pay out a prearranged sum to the vendor.

OCTOBER Boom: A blue diamond of 19.41 carats fetches a record \$5.5 million (£2.82 million) at Christie's New York in a sale which is a Christie's jewellery record at \$31 million.

Gloom: Bad results coming in hard and fast, with 38 per cent of Christie's Hong Kong sale of 19th and 20th century paintings un-

loved, and 41 per cent of Sotheby's New York's Himalayan and Southeast Asian Scandinavian paintings are given an 86 per cent thumbs-down at Sotheby's New York.

NOVEMBER Boom: El Greco's record soars to £1.69 million at Edmund Peel in Madrid, in spite of a heritage export ban. There are new records for European silver at £560,652; while Constable's *The Lock* breaks the world record for a British painting thanks to Baron Thyssen-Bornemisza's £10.78 million bid at Sotheby's. A Mozart manuscript equals the record for a single musical manuscript at Sotheby's, at £880,000.

Gloom: Elizabeth Taylor's Van Gogh, *The Asylum and the Chapel at St Remy*, shunned in London. Only 25 per cent of Christie's Impressionist offering sells, for a total of £10.3 million. Sotheby's equivalent sale raised £6.69 million for 39 lots, compared to £66.8 million for 78 lots last year.

December: The Henry Ford II collection of Impressionist paintings, guaranteed at \$20 million, is a disaster, but the New York season picks up momentum.

DECEMBER, Gloom: Forty-six per cent unsold at Christie's Chinese export porcelain sale, London; 44.4 per cent of Sotheby's Modern British unsold. Announcement of massive redundancies.

S.J.C.

Going, going, gone...

The best of times and the worst of times: Sarah Jane Checkland looks at conflicting reports on the state of the art market

Lord Gowrie's approach to the art market slump was to announce the joyous news that Sotheby's, of which he is chairman, is building "exciting" new auction premises outside London. The plan, the former arts minister said with politician's glee, was part of a rationalising process for the Nineties. It took persistent questioning to draw out what he had left in parentheses: — that the plan, entailing the closure of Sotheby's two provincial outlets, Chester and Billingshurst, also meant 80 redundancies in Britain alone.

In contrast, Lord Carrington of Christie's went for heroic gestures of defeat when he announced his results last week. Following the halving of his company's turnover for the autumn season, from £675 million to £334 million, he said that 145 members of staff were being sacrificed to the common weal. The noble lord promised to fall, if not on his sword, then on his salary, which he has frozen at £146,000.

Meanwhile, in direct contrast, a number of quality London dealers were reporting sensational returns for their current exhibitions.

Seventy-five per cent of the Mui-Tei jade exhibition sold within hours at Blaauw, the oriental gallery; Eskenazi has sold 103 of its 141 Japanese lacquer items, for a total of £3.1 million. After two days, the running total for Trinity Fine Art's Old Master drawings at Harari & Johns was £750,000.

So what is the true state of the art market as we end 1990?

Judging from the auction diary above, the year has been one of erratic performance masked by hype. Auctioneers focused our minds on the upper end of the pendulum's swing (in particular Van Gogh's *Dr Gachet* and Renoir's *Au Moulin de la Galette*, sold for a total of £95 million), passing briefly over the disasters.

The two big houses' glossy reviews of the year, just published, are good examples of the hype. In his introduction, Lord Carrington revels in the highs, with no mention of the flops.

Sotheby's tone waxes lyrical about an auction house being "an expression of man's best hopes in sustaining that most enabling part of common life we call civilisation. And as we have depended on those who created works of art, who gathered them, who cared for them, so the future depends on us."

Meanwhile, new markets such as Scandinavian and Belgian painting went down the chute. Fewer than half Sotheby's paintings of austere northern scenes

The auctioneers blame Gulf tensions and the recession but, judging from the sales by dealers, the money is there

Orient galleries have closed in the Portobello Road area, while Waddington Galleries on Cork Street has sustained three redundancies.

Yet the Angel Flowers and Vanessa Devereux galleries say they are doing well. Both were rewarded by their initiative in exhibiting at the recent Los Angeles art fair, thus seeking out one pocket of the American market still going strong.

In general some categories, such as modern British art and picture frames, are wobbly but still capable of great heights, while others, such as quality Old Master paintings and jewellery, are excellent. Witness the £355,000 for Ava Gardner's trousseau and the strong prices at Christie's Old Master sale on December 14, climaxing in a record £2.42 million for the Spanish artist Murillo.

The auctioneers may well blame the Gulf tensions and the recession for their gloom but, judging from the current sales by dealers, the money for art buying is still there. According to the dealer Giuseppe Eskenazi, recent events

to £1,000 budget, with clocks, furniture, pictures and books.

● Sunday December 30: The Brocante Fair at the Maltings, Ely, Cambridgeshire (0483 606) is gentle, offering rugs and samplers, furniture and china. Best offering a brocade and gilt screen and matching firescreen.

● Thursday December 27: The 80th stand Antique and Collectors' Fair at the Allendale Centre, Wimborne, Dorset (0590 677687) has much for the impecunious and childlike in the form of tinplate toys and old wireless sets, at prices ranging from £5 to £500.

● Friday, December 28: The Collectors' Market in Edgbaston, Warwickshire County Cricket Ground (021-743 2259) caters from 11am for buyers with a 50%



Boom, gloom and dealer takes all: (from left) Stanley Spencer's record-breaking *The Crucifixion*, a failed Degas pastel, and a Japanese writing box sold for £350,000 by Eskenazi

have made the market "two-tiered", with deals continuing to take place between dealer and dealer, collector and collector, but by-passing the auction houses. Auction prices are, it appears, no longer an indication of the market.

Twenty years ago, the convention was for auction valuations to be 20 to 30 per cent below dealer prices, with the reserve (or lowest price at which the vendor agrees to sell) at 30 to 40 per cent below that. Recently, the insanity of speculation caused this to be reversed. As Leslie Waddington, king of London's contemporary art mecca, Cork Street, complained after last May's contemporary sales, the estimates had been 50 per cent above his retail prices. "We have a lot of amateurs over-estimating pictures at a time when there has been a tightening of money," he said. The short term meant unprecedented growth for the auction houses. The medium term is the present problem. Who knows what next?

The sickest investors must be the smart alecs spurred on by the hype, who this time last year boasted how much they had paid for a given work, and now cannot sell on for love or money.

The happiest investors must be the British Rail Pension Fund managers who, having started collecting in the early Seventies, got out of Impressionism, Chinese ceramics and Victorian paintings in the past year. The fact that they have kept their Old Masters looks like further good housekeeping.

BACK in the recession of 1974, Sotheby's then chairman, Peter Wilson, cunningly lined up the British Rail Pension Fund managers to soak up all the unloved top lots "if three of four other funds were to enter the running, an artificial price spiral would be virtually inevitable," *The Times* warned. With such investors trying to cool their charred fingers after the collapse of that spiral, who can Sotheby's turn to now?

The only people to make money from buying and selling art have done so through luck, not design. It is time to return to the old wisdom that art should be bought, not for investment, but for love.



Boom, gloom and dealer takes all: (from left) Stanley Spencer's record-breaking *The Crucifixion*, a failed Degas pastel, and a Japanese writing box sold for £350,000 by Eskenazi

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PUBLISHING

Comics are no joke: official

The rest of the world loves them; publishers say that we soon will. Joseph Connolly on the rise of the graphic novel in Britain

The cult of the graphic novel is in the ascendant. The term is a rather pretentious catch-all soufflé for full-length stories in comic strip form aimed at young adults. Those with a vested interest — the importers of what tends to be a largely American product, together with the small number of specialist UK publishers — have for many years attempted to impress this fact upon the British consciousness. But now there is a willingness among mainstream publishers to commit big investments to the genre.

Allied to that is the evident eagerness of large bookelling chains to devote generous amounts of floorpace to the increasingly large array of eye-catching — some would say garish — material. All of which has finally propelled this latest phenomenon to the forefront of book trade agendas. The big push to make comics for adults "respectable" is underway. Nevertheless, an uphill struggle is foreseen. The British, despite our rich heritage of caricature and children's comics, still seem to wrestle with guilt feelings that run deep when it comes to the comics, because comics are inextricably linked with childhood. Although it may possibly be considered witty to confess freely to taking both *The Times* and the *Beano*, there are not yet many adults catching up with the exploits of the Bash Street Kids.

The ingrained belief remains that comics should be either disdained from on high or guilty enjoyed behind closed doors. Foreigners — particularly the Americans, Japanese and French — view this attitude as typically British, predictably snobbish and perfectly mad. In America adulation of cartoon characters and comics has long been a way of life (the fan clubs for Batman and Superman boasting more members than the Conservative Party in this country), and in Japan graphic novels sell almost everything. France has built the world's first museum devoted to animation and comic book art at Angoulême, and French appetite for the new-style graphic novel is said to be insatiable — due in part, perhaps, to their love for such antecedents as Tintin and Asterix.

All these countries treat the graphic novel with deference. Is there something about the British sense of humour that will not



"This is the graphic novel at its best," agrees Mirkandani. "But we publish more commercial titles, too."

The two graphic novels cited by most devotees as being the most revered and influential are Frank Miller's *Batman: The Dark Knight Returns* (the graphic bestseller of all time, with sales in the UK of 75,000 since 1986) and the captivatingly drawn *Watchmen* (1987) by Alan Moore and Dave Gibbons. Both of these are published by the leader in the field: Titan Books, which has produced more than 250 titles during its ten-year history. "We never print less than 10,000 copies," says its publicist, Nick Griffiths, "and sales get better as we get more shop space."

So who are all these people, evidently buying hundreds of thousands of graphic novels each year, at between £7 and £10 a time — when most of the book-buying public remain unaware of their existence? "A fairly sophisticated audience is what we have," says Griffiths. "People who respond to a quality package." This sounds vague, but it appears to be the market into which Gollancz — a publisher noted for its science-fiction list — is eager to tap.

"I hate putting an age to our buyers," says Faith Brooker, edi-

tor of 1991's launch into the field, "but I suppose from about 17 to early 30s." Male? "Yes, I'm afraid so. It's almost exclusively male territory." Here would appear to be the stumbling block. Despite all the publishers' claims for sophistication, and the undoubted quality of the artwork, the titles with the highest profile are, with notable



exceptions, still little more than extremely long versions of the American Marvel and DC comics of the Fifties. Few originate in Britain, and virtually all seem obsessed with fantasy, caped crusaders and the supernatural, with a smattering devoted to the surreal, whose endings are so inconclusive as to be maddening.

But if we are to believe the enthusiasts, we are still glimpsing barely the tip of the iceberg. Soon, they say, every type of fiction may be presented in comic-strip format, and the genre will cater for every class, gender and age group. "Watch out for the graphic novel," warns Faith Brooker. "Its time has come."

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THE SUNDAY TIMES

Del Boy's big break

"The writer, John Sullivan, was to put it delicately, terrified of my playing the character. He had only seen me as Granville, and he just couldn't believe I could produce the streetwise energy and toughness.

... I partly based Del on a guy I once knew in Plaistow. He was just like John's description — the coat, the sovereign rings, the accent you could cut with a knife. Extraordinary." David Jason, in *The Sunday Times* tomorrow.

Huns exchange hell for leather

piece of social commentary is the humour he extracts.

Yobs they may be, but his Huns are also endearing. Judge's willingness to embrace the vulgarity of the early Verdi idiom, and his implicit admission that putting rampaging hordes on stage has always been a bit of a giggle, allows his actors to indulge freely in energetic hammering.

Striding and strutting, John Tomlinson's magnificently sung Attila becomes an engagingly daft mixture of bravado and paranoia. He heartily embraces cliché after cliché — striding down to the audience to make his points — and does it with an innate theatricality that brings us far closer to the essence of craftsmanship than any number of cerebral anti-heroes.

Perhaps it is just as well for in Karen Huffstodt's ferocious Odabella there is a formidable opponent. Clad in Madonna-style breastplate and wielding a sword at the slightest provocation, she is not so much the face of militant feminism as seductress turned warrior. Yes, the constant preening and posing suggest more the world of 1950s comics than 5th-century Rome. But the singing is such a fine combination of power



Formidable: Karen Huffstodt as Odabella and John Tomlinson in the title role

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Just as fruity as ever

The Love for Three Oranges

Coliseum

THE chorus at the start of Prokofiev's manic opera is split into factions demanding different kinds of entertainment: tragedy, comedy, farce, poetic romance, unfeared-of grotesquerie. Well, Richard Jones's production provides them all in exuberant over-spill. This is laughter in the dark, a torrent of theatrical invention where hilarity flips over into nightmare and back again, a show whose energy and magic and smart performances and vigorous bad taste will appeal to anyone out of nappies. It was a triumph

when it was first presented by Opera North; it was a triumph for the ENO last year; and it is a triumph again as their 1990 Christmas show, faithfully revived by Tim Hopkins.

What also distinguishes this new run is the orchestral performance under Martin André. The sheer sound is thrilling, fizzing with brilliance, full of unusual richness (the case is made for Prokofiev as a composer of Ravel-like imaginative precision), rhythmically tight, and using discipline as a tool to screw up the savagery and the high colour. What one hears from the pit is as crazy and wonderful as what one sees on the stage.

As for the principals, many of them have been here before, but their performances are as wild and full as ever. Paul

Harri is buoyant as the jester who has much of the burden of the vocal music and of the plot, such as it is; Alan Woodrow is the valiant hero of a prince he leads to the rescue of the three oranges. The baddies are well represented by Donald Maxwell's loathsome, dripping, lascivious Leander, Anne Collins's bullish Clarissa, Phyllis Canman's forceful Fata Morgana and Fiona Kimmins's saucy-nosed schoolgirl Smeraldina. Rosa Mannion does her stuff as the beautiful, sweet-voiced princess the prince eventually wins; Annemarie Sand and Melanie Armitstead are also delightful before they die of thirst. Only ticketholders will discover how this, and many other surprises, happen.

PAUL GRIFFITHS

Broad strokes from the brushcut idol

ROCK

Billy Idol
Wembley Arena

CARTOON rock is a term often used when Billy Idol's music is under discussion. Is this fair? Never a convincing punk, Idol has responded to the demands of pop stardom with unbridled enthusiasm. Some people find his mixture of macho swagger, bombast and subtlety confusing and so dismiss him for a lack of either clear seriousness or unchannelled stupidity.

His first British concert since a near-fatal motorcycle accident were Idol's opportunity to reinvent his image with some local credibility. The Wembley stage set — inspired by the aesthetic sensibilities of a ghost-train designer, seemingly — certainly embrased the cartoon stigma.

A huge mechanical fist revolved and raised a finger: from behind a door, Billy appeared in silhouette and limped forward. Was the walking stick a prop or a crutch? Although he quickly abandoned it, his movements were obviously restricted. At times his stiff-legged pose was uncannily reminiscent of the late Gene Vincent (an Idol idol), another victim of a motorcycle accident. Such images from history, set alongside the rock and fairground iconography, are all a part of Idol's mastery of melodrama. Songs such as "Charlie of Love" from the recent *Charmed Life* album, or "Eyes Without a Face" sounded impres-



Innocent charm: Idol

The decision to relate a long-winded story (the inspiration behind that attractive Fifties-style ballad, "Sweet Sixteen") about the building of Florida's kitch Coral Castle could have been disastrous; instead, our gaze grew fonder. As kitch as Coral Castle himself, Idol played the image to the last ounce, yet behind the cartoon, an original musical brain was at work.

DAVID TOOP

Jollity in Verona

THEATRE

Romeo and Juliet,
The Pantomime
Finborough Theatre
Club, Earl's Court

NEW Heritage Theatre Company was launched in September with a play about the childhood of the four Brontës. Before taking the work on a national tour, the company let its hair down with 80 minutes — no interval — of innocuous jollity by way of an end-of-term romp.

The star-cross'd lovers of Verona, "Earth Court's twin town", are transmogrified into pantomime. Romeo is, of course, a thigh-slapping, bumbling principal boy (whom Sally Dunbar's unwavering smile invests with either satirical comment or cheerful imbecility). Juliet is a freckled bookworm mistreated by her wicked Capulet stepmother and clownish step brothers, Paris and Tibby. Nurse is a female dame (Karin Goodman), a fit north-country mate for Fairy Laurence (Colin Heber-Percy). He is not

MARTIN HOYLE

• Boxing Day in *The Times*: Jeremy Kingston presents a guide to the best holiday shows for children; Geoff Brown reviews the new films opening that day; and Benedict Nightingale reveals his choice of the finest theatre production of 1990

CHRISTMAS ENTERTAINMENT FOR EVERYONE from the ROYAL OPERA HOUSE

BBC2 : Christmas Day 6.25pm
The Royal Opera:
The Cunning Little Vixen.

BBC2 : December 27th 7.45pm
The Birmingham Royal Ballet:
Hobson's Choice.

BBC2 : New Year's Eve 7.00pm
The Royal Opera:
Die Fledermaus (Sponsored by Midland Bank).

See Radio Times for full details.

ROYAL OPERA HOUSE

This advertisement has been paid for by The Friends of Covent Garden.

BBC

7.00 Crystal Tipps and Allstar. Animated fun about a girl and her dog (i) 7.05 Janosch's Story Time. Animated stories (r) 7.30 Paddington Bear. Cartoon about a lively community of garden peas (i)

7.35 Breakfast Serials. Children's programme comprising five different serials ranging from thriller to crazy comedy, featuring a host of characters all played by Caroline Berry, John Biggins, Lucy Jenkins and William Petrie 8.10 Babes. Animated version of the children's classic. *Babes the Elephant* 8.35 Bravestarr. Cartoon adventures in outer space with Marshal Bravestarr (i)

9.00 Going Live! Christmas edition of the children's magazine hosted by Sarah Greene and Philip Schofield. Cliff Richard is among the many guests, as are Su Pollard and Jeffrey Holland from *Yours Truly, M'lord?* who take part in a celebrity Double Dare competition against Pauline Quirk and Linda Robson from *Birds of a Feather*. Nick Conway and Victor McGuire (Jack and Biffy from *Bread*) also pop in to the studio. Plus music, competitions, videos and cartoons 12.12 Weather

12.15 Grandstand introduced by Bob Wilson. The line-up is (subject to alteration) 12.20 and 1.30 Rallycross: the Metcupet British Grand Prix from Brands Hatch 12.45, 1.15 and 1.30 Racing from Chepstow, 1.00 News, 2.05 Rugby League: live coverage of the Royal Trophy semi-final between Rochdale and Bradford Northern at Headingley, 3.50 Football half-times, 4.00 Golf: coverage of a charity skins game at Sunningdale between Ian Woosnam, Wayne Grady, Jose-Maria Olazabal and Sandy Lyle, 4.35 Final Score 5.05 News with John Humphrys (Weather)

5.15 Regional news and sport: Wales (to 5.50) Wales on Saturday 5.20 Stay Tooned! Tony Robinson introduces seasonal cartoons including the rarely screened *Peace on Earth* by Hugh Harman and a classic *Tom and Jerry*, *The Night Before Christmas* 5.50 Every Second Counts: Paul Daniels presents the quiz in which married couples compete to build up time for the chance of a dream holiday

6.30 Challenge Arneka. The hyperactive Annelise Rice and her Challenger truck enlist the services of plasterers, plumbers, electricians, painters, nurses and doctors and set off to Romania. Her aim is to renovate and refurbish an orphanage in just one week, then throw a Christmas party for 600 youngsters, if anyone can do it, she can! (Ceefax)

7.30 Les Dennis Christmas Laughter Show. The comedian is joined by guests as they go through their comic routines and bizarre sketches in this festive edition of his show 8.00 News

8.00 Film: *InnerSpace* (1987). Tom Stoppard's production line rolled out this unpredictable sci-fi movie about a minuscule-sized air force base that has moved into the body of a supermarket clerk. An unpredictable comedy that owes much to the Sixties sci-fi classic *Fantastic Voyage*. The special effects won an Oscar. None of the cast, which includes Dennis Quaid, Martin Short and Meg Ryan, did Directed by Joe Dante, whose first film, also for Spielberg, was *Gremlins* (Ceefax)

8.55 News with John Humphrys (Ceefax) Sport and weather



Fatal attraction: Roy Scheider and Meryl Streep (10.15pm)

10.15 Film: *Still of the Night* (1982). Roy Scheider as a psychiatrist attracted to a woman (Meryl Streep) who may have murdered one of his patients in this wayward homage to Alfred Hitchcock. Sick and enjoyable up to a point, with some set pieces deliberately reminiscent of *North by Northwest*, but as the plot thickens it reveals large holes and ineffectual narrative. Directed by Robert Benton (Ceefax)

11.45 Eurythmics Live. Annie Lennox and Dave Stewart filmed on the final leg of their *Revenge* tour in Sydney, demonstrating why they are one of Britain's most exciting live bands. They are seen performing "There Must Be An Angel", "Sweet Dreams" and "Sisters Are Doing It For Themselves"

1.20am Weather

SATELLITE

SKY ONE

8.15 The Ascents and Marco Polo satellite. 8.00pm *Summer 8.30* The Flying Kite 7.00 *Fun Factory*, 11.00 *The Good Women* 12.00 *Beyond 2000* 3.00 *Combat* 2.00 *Wrestling Challenge* 3.00 *Cost Cutters* 4.00 *Family Action* 5.00 *Leisure* 6.00 *The Action Family* 7.00 *Feeble Seven* 7.30 *Living Color* 8.00 *China Beach* 9.00 *Designers* 9.30 *Murphy Brown* 10.00 *The Happening* 11.30 *Monsters* 12.00 *News in the Tropics* 12.30 *Pages from Styx*

SKY NEWS

8.15 *Via the Ascents*. News on the hour 9.30 *Newsline 8.30* The Reporters 9.30 *Newsline 10.30* Motor Sports News 11.00 *Dayline* 11.30 *The Reporters* 12.30pm *Newsline 12.30* *Motor Sports News* 1.00 *Dayline* 1.30 *Newsline 1.30* *Motor Sports News* 2.00 *Dayline* 2.30 *Newsline 2.30* *Motor Sports News* 3.00 *Dayline* 3.30 *Newsline 3.30* *Motor Sports News* 4.00 *Dayline* 4.30 *Newsline 4.30* *Motor Sports News* 5.00 *Dayline* 5.30 *Newsline 5.30* *Motor Sports News* 6.00 *Dayline* 6.30 *Newsline 6.30* *Motor Sports News* 7.00 *Dayline* 7.30 *Newsline 7.30* *Motor Sports News* 8.00 *Dayline* 8.30 *Newsline 8.30* *Motor Sports News* 9.00 *Dayline* 9.30 *Newsline 9.30* *Motor Sports News* 10.00 *Dayline* 10.30 *Newsline 10.30* *Motor Sports News* 11.00 *Dayline* 11.30 *Newsline 11.30* *Motor Sports News* 12.00 *Newsline 12.30* *Motor Sports News* 1.00 *Dayline* 1.30 *Newsline 1.30* *Motor Sports News* 2.00 *Dayline* 2.30 *Newsline 2.30* *Motor Sports News* 3.00 *Dayline* 3.30 *Newsline 3.30* *Motor 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BBC 1

7.45 Film: *Annie Oakley* (1925, b/w). Barbara Stanwyck stars as the legendary sharpshooter of the wild west in this lively semi-western. Directed by George Stevens.

8.15 *Celtic Quest*: Rosemary Harris visits Whitby, where St Hilda founded an abbey on the cliff top above the harbour.

10.00 *Driving Force* - Down Under! Pro-celebrity driving competition from Perth, Australia (r).

11.00 *Film: White Christmas* (1954). The traditional seasonal musical starring Bing Crosby, Rosemary Clooney, Danny Kaye and Vera-Ellen. Directed by Michael Curtiz. (Cefax)

1.00 *1000 Miles to Christmas*. A child's-eye view of Christmas (r). Christmas celebration, Victorian style, from the Royal Albert Hall, in the festive spirit, which will raise money for the NSPCC and Save the Children Fund.

2.00 *EastEnders*. *Omnibus* edition (r). (Cefax)

3.00 *Film: Pomegranate* (1976). Reasonably successful big screen spin-off from the popular television comedy series about life inside HM Slave Prison. Starring Robbie Barker, Fulton Mackay, Brian Wilde and Richard Beckinsale. Co-produced by Dick Clement. (Cefax)

4.30 *Hearts of Gold* Christmas Special. Esther Rantzen and Michael Gruhn pay tribute to another selection of big-hearted folk. (Cefax)

5.15 *Schofield's Europe*. Philip Schofield explores the continent to fix his smile and practice his interview technique as he visits Berlin. (Cefax)

5.45 *The Chronicles of Narnia*. Last episode. (Cefax)

6.10 *Music*: Lynette Lithgow, Weather

6.25 *Songs of Praise* Christmas Special. Sally Magnusson introduces host for this Christmas special and is joined by President Vaclav Havel, Placido Domingo, Jeana Coates and Jeremy Irons in the *Music* studio. (Cefax)

7.15 *You Rang M'Lord?* Last in the series of the Twenties sitcom with Su Pollard, Paul Shand and Jeffrey Holland as the below-stairs staff to Lord Meldrum and family. (Cefax)



Life in death: Chief Inspector Alleyn (Simon Williams) (0.05pm)

8.05 *Artists in Crime*.

CHOICE: Having worked its way through Lord Peter, Miss Marple and Campion, the BBC's pursuit of the golden age whodunit reaches *Niglo Maran's* Chief Inspector Alleyn, played by Simon Williams. This plot for what will surely be a March series is a dramatisation by the reliable T.R. Bowen, who was responsible for several of the Marples, of her 1949 story about the murder of an artist's model. Although Williams struggles to breathe life into the difficult and colourless Alleyn, the supporting material more than compensates. With wifely, male and female, blood that looks like blood, homosexuality, lesbianism and transvestism, we are a long way from the cosy world of St Mary Mead. As whodunits tend to, this one gets bogged down in the lengthy questioning of the suspects. But it's only playing from a good cast helps to carry things along until Alleyn is ready to pounce. (Cefax)

9.50 *News with Michael Buerk*. (Cefax) Weather10.05 *Dunrannin*.

CHOICE: Having launched *House of Cards* just as Mrs Thatcher was being toppled, the BBC comes up with another fortuitous piece of topicality in the shape of a sitcom by Alastair Beaton and John Wells about the Dulwich afterlife of Margaret and Denis. The show was in the can before the events of November but allowing for minor inaccuracies such as Denis still being Mr, the timing is perfect. Wells and Angela Thorne, whose likeness is uncanny and acting superb, repeat their stage roles as the Thatchers, with Liz Smith as their daily, and well-cast versions of Mark and Carol. Although lacking the comic subtlety of the *Dear Bill* column in *Private Eye*, *Dunrannin* is an enjoyable romp which derives many of its jokes from visiting Mrs T with the results of her privatisation mania, with the Royal Mail run from Beirut and the Church of England forced to sell timewhales in its graveyards. (Cefax)

10.35 *Everyman*: To Give or Not To Give. As the season of goodwill approaches, *Everyman* looks at the nature of altruism and asks whether the milk of human kindness is a distillable commodity

11.15 *Film: Sugarland Express* (1974) starring Goldie Hawn and William Atherton. Steven Spielberg's stylish account, based on a true story, of a young couple's bid to reclaim their baby son from the welfare authorities. (Cefax) 1.05am Weather

7.00 *Crystal Tipps and Alastair* 7.05 *Hello Spencer*. Puppet fun (r). 7.30 *King Radio*. Cartoon (r) 7.36 *Playdays* 7.55 *Animal Album* (r) 8.10 *Pinocchio*. Animated adventures about the boy puppet.

8.30 *Movable Feasts*. Children's multi-faceted drama series 8.45 *Liri Bits*. Cartoon tale of phobias in an enchanted forest 9.10 *Correns*, Sophie Aldred and Stephen Johnson answer young viewers' questions (r) 9.30 *Dungeons and Dragons* 9.55 *Blue Peter Omnibus* (r).

10.40 *Maid Marian And Her Merry Men*. Children's comedy series starring Troy Robinson and Kate Lomergen (r) 11.05 *Boxpops*. Pop music, television clips and voxpops 11.45 *The O-Zone*

12.00 *Regional Reviews* of the Parliamentary Week. Wales: Stay Tuned; Northern Ireland: Radio 4.

12.30 *Scrutiny*. Ian McEwan looks at the important work of contemporary commentators. (Cofax)

1.00 *Film: The Bonfire* (1963). Venetian Redgrave and Christopher Plummer star in the Merchant/Everett adaptation of Henry James's tale set in New England in 1876. Verena Tannetti (Madeleine Potter) is a young woman torn between the suffragette teachings of her mentor, played by Redgrave, and the and the handsomeness of Basil Renshaw (Christopher Reeve). Despite careful period detail and unfurling adherence to the original text, the film is slow-moving and uninviting. Directed by James Ivory

3.00 *Beethoven Symphonies*. Starting with Symphony No 1 in C, Roger Norrington and the London Classical Players begin a daily cycle of Beethoven's symphonies with English subtitles, which features an international touring hit and old wunderkind for Mozart. Piers Bergmann and Thommy Bergman play the star-crossed lovers in this tale of light opera at *Entire Madigan* who falls in love with Count Sparte, a married army officer. Set among breathtaking Scandinavian landscapes, the film is a scenic treat and is underscored by Mozart's Piano Concerto No 21. Directed by Bo Widerberg.

4.56 *Rugby Special*. Chris Rees introduces highlights of *England v Scotland* 8 and *Wales*. Wales includes Pontypool v Bridgend.

5.50 *The Spirit of Christmas*. Next year Dundee will celebrate its 800th anniversary. Selina Scott is joined in the city by celebrities including Paul Coia, Ronnie Corbett, Wendy Craig and Joanna Lumley. They are helped in the celebrations by choir and a brass band.

6.30 *Star Sunday*. David Vane introduces the programme's first look at the women downwind and alalom stars from Morzine, France.

7.15 *The Trials of Life*. The final programme in David Attenborough's stirring examination of behaviour in the natural world deals with the necessary but also the dangerous process of reproduction. As usual Attenborough's enthusiasm is more than matched by the quality of the camerawork. (r). (Cefax)

8.05 *Tchaikovsky from Leningrad*. Jossye Norman makes her USSR debut in a gala concert celebrating the 150th anniversary of Tchaikovsky's birth on December 1. Other internationally acclaimed artists taking part include Itzhak Perlman, Yo-Yo Ma and Boris Berezovsky. They are joined by the Leningrad Philharmonic Orchestra, conducted by Yuri Temirkanov. The concert includes highlights of Tchaikovsky's greatest works and, as a grand finale, the 1812 Overture is played complete with fireworks and cannons in Puskin Square.

9.45 *First and Last*. Concluding part of Michael Frayn's masterly drama with *Joss Ackland* as a newly-retired husband who decides to carry out his lifetime ambition of walking from Lands End to John O'Groats. Also stars Pat Heywood, Patricia Routledge and Lionel Jeffries (r).

10.35 *Film: The Big Easy* (1987). Dennis Quaid and Ellen Barkin star in a fast and original thriller set in the Big Easy, New Orleans. Special prosecutor Anne Osborne has been sent to New Orleans to investigate police corruption. Initially shocked by the casual attitude of Lieutenant McSwain and his readiness to accept 'sparks', Osborne finds herself increasingly attracted to him, and professional hostility gives way to physical desire. Stylish and erotic, the film succeeds in combining the romantic elements of the plot with the detection, and the excitement is maintained throughout. Directed by Jim McBride. (Cefax)

12.15am *Dance Energy*. News from the dance world (r)

12.55 *Rapido*. Guests include Vanilla Ice (r). Ends at 1.30

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EC agreement to ban CFCs three years before deadline

From PETER GUILFORD AND MICHAEL BINYON IN BRUSSELS

THE European Community has unanimously agreed to ban by July 1997 chemicals which puncture the ozone layer, well ahead of the end-of-century deadline set by the world's governments under the Montreal protocol.

David Trippier, junior environment minister, backed the agreement, which outlaws the production, import and use of chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs), saying it would "send a strong signal to the rest of the world that we in the EC are determined to stop damaging the stratospheric ozone layer as quickly as possible".

He said Britain would eliminate CFCs at least six months earlier, and in a radical departure from the

government's earlier opposition to "green tax incentives", he did not rule out tax relief to help companies and consumers meet tougher standards.

EC environment ministers meeting in Brussels yesterday also imposed new limits on vehicle exhaust fumes, in effect making catalytic converters obligatory on new cars by 1993. Even stricter measures will follow, and governments will be permitted to offer tax incentives for buying clean cars.

Under their agreement to halt the depletion of the ozone, the ministers pledged to cut CFCs by 85 per cent by mid-1995 and eliminate them completely two years later. Halon gases, too, will be abolished by 2000.

Carlo Ripa di Meana, European environment commissioner, challenged the United States and Japan to match the EC commitment. "We wanted to go faster", said Mr Trippier, but there had been opposition from France, Spain, Portugal and Greece.

Total elimination of CFCs by 2000 was agreed under the Montreal protocol, revised last year in London. Some of the biggest Third World users of CFCs, notably China and India, were won over with a promise of financial assistance and the transfer of clean technology.

Mr Trippier described the parallel deal to cut car exhaust levels as "dramatic", saying that all new cars bought after 1992 would emit only a quarter of the fumes produced the average car today. Mr Trippier said the deal finally dispelled the cloud of confusion hanging over Europe's motor industry.

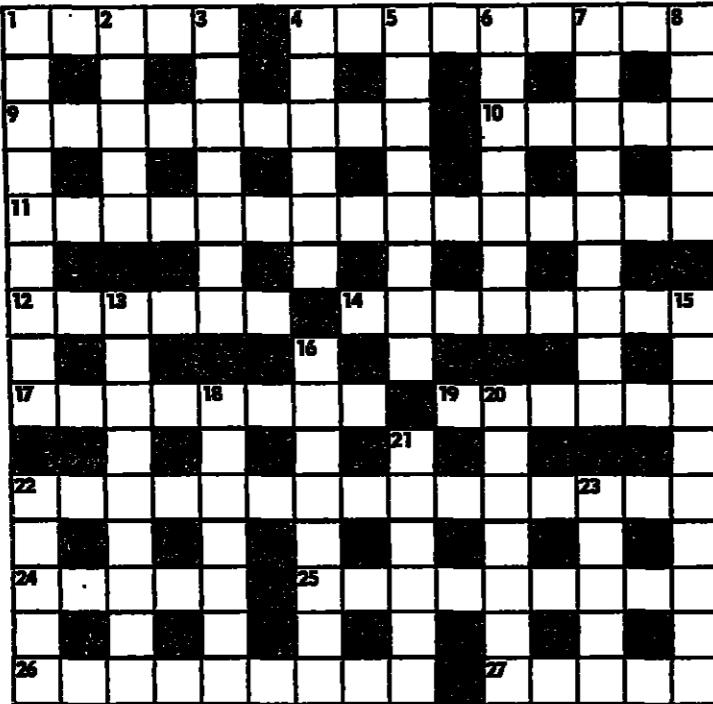
Britain adopted a markedly more conciliatory stance on all issues in the package of environmental measures proposed yesterday. It gave strong support to European Commission plans to toughen standards of waste disposal and regulations on the handling of hazardous materials.

● In an effort to reduce air pollution, only half of the cars in Milan and the 15 surrounding municipalities are being allowed on the road over the pre-Christmas weekend.

Hopes of obtaining additional cash in advance from TWA, which hopes to buy the rump of the troubled airline once the United Airlines deal is signed, have also been dashed because TWA itself is also waiting for a decision from Britain on where American Airlines would be allowed to take over their routes from Heathrow.

Under existing British legislation, no new carrier is allowed to operate from Heathrow.

THE TIMES CROSSWORD NO 18,484



ACROSS

- Name, work by Kipling I put in this genre (3-2).
- Occasionally — approximately daily (9).
- All-rounder left side, in a sense (9).
- First gear (5).
- Avance luggage before term in Oxford, for example (11-4).
- Extra work done in French centre (6).
- Job description for this monarch... (8).
- ...contains special allowance (8).
- From elsewhere, convey meaning (6).
- Outcome black when red loses on this? (7,8).
- No peace of mind amongst gangsters (5).
- Best former minimum value (9).
- Work of a forger, bent but possibly lucky (9).
- Poser returned subscription — minimal amount (5).

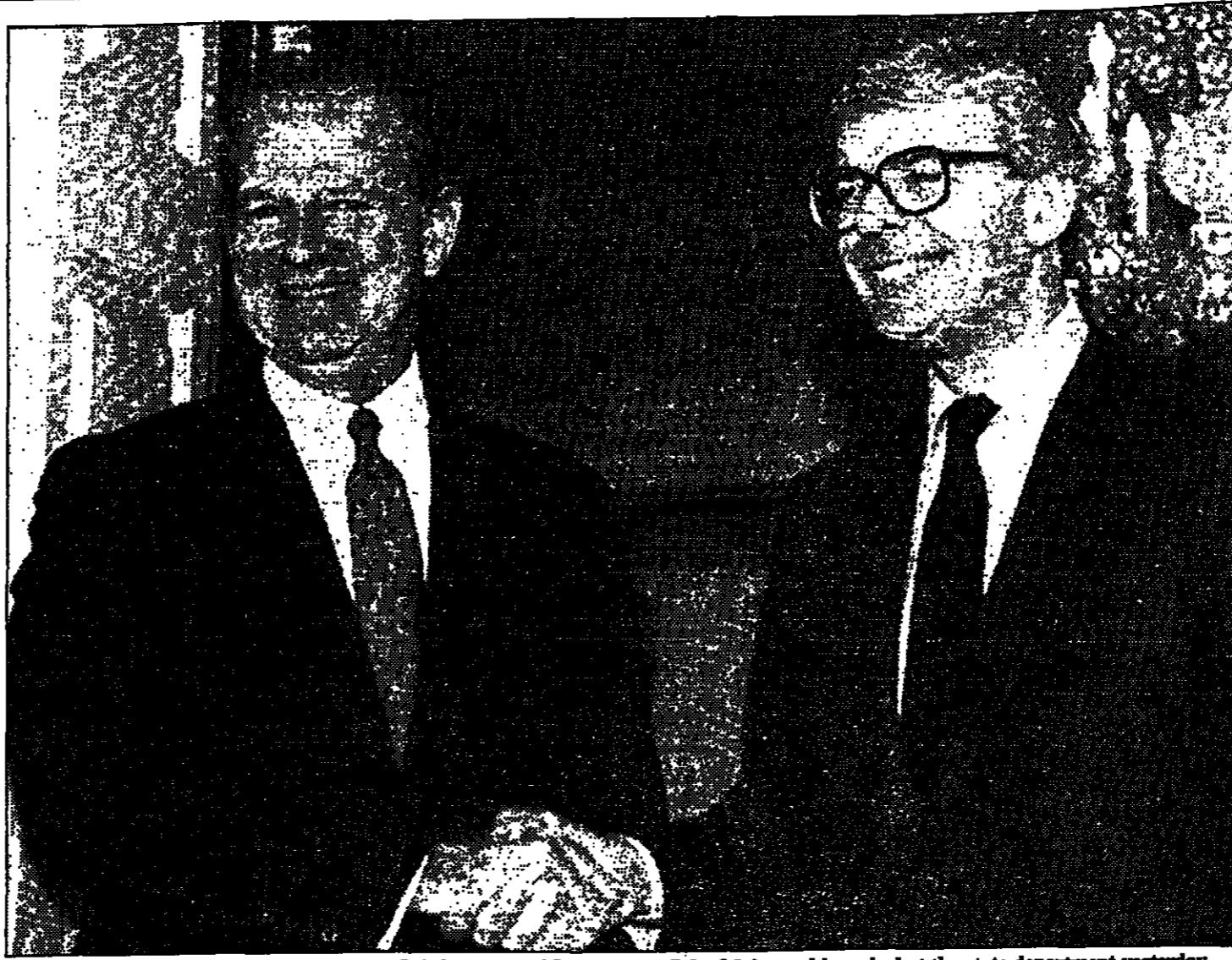
DOWN

- Way to maintain ruthless control over late news (4-5).
- Solution to Puzzle No 18,483
- PLAUSIBLE BELLA
- SEEMED
- ACKEMMA DAMAGED
- LAIKIAH
- MANIC HAMMERTOE
- COCHEB
- TIE LOOKADGERS
- EMOMI
- SPRINGBOARD MUD
- TEETDE
- DELIVERER YONKES
- REIIGITI
- IMAGERY CLOTHED
- WOSA
- EVENS UNSETLED

PARKER DUOFOLD

A prize of a super Parker Duofold International Fountain Pen, with an 18 carat gold nib and fully gilded for the lifetime of the original owner will be given for the first five correct solutions opened next Thursday. Entries should be addressed to: The Times, Saturday Crossword Competition, PO Box 486, Virginia Street, London E1 9DD. The winners and solution will be published next Saturday.

Name/Address



Washington welcome: James Baker, the US Secretary of State, greets John Major on his arrival at the state department yesterday

Antares submarine 'in mock battle'

By KERRY GILL

THE Royal Navy submarine thought to have sunk the Antares fishing boat with the loss of four lives had taken part in a simulated attack on a frigate before the accident, according to an interim enquiry report yesterday.

On board the nuclear-powered hunter-killer submarine HMS Trenchant were students from the Submarine Command School

being tested as submarine commanders. Each took a turn as a "duty captain" in charge of one of the exercises.

The report by the marine accident investigation branch of the transport department said that when a student took over, he was under observation by an experienced commander known as the teacher.

About 2am on November 22, while operating underwater off the Isle of Wight, the teacher and submarine captain had gone to the wardroom to discuss the students' performances. Trenchant was left in the charge of the duty captain.

About 15 minutes later, the duty captain was told of a contact on the forward sonar equipment. He ordered the submarine to swing to

port. Shortly afterwards a noise was heard indicating contact with steel objects and Trenchant surfaced to periscope depth.

At 2.38am, she sighted two fishing boats. She surfaced and the crew discovered a length of cable and chain caught around a dome on the submarine. Part of the cable, with a considerable weight on it, led back into the water.

Trenchant tried unsuccessfully to call up fishing vessels on a number of radio channels. The submarine reported the incident to the navy base at Faslane and continued its exercises.

About 90 minutes later the coastguard was told by Faslane that a submarine had snagged a trawl and that it had seen the fishing vessel, which appeared to be safe. Minutes later Faslane made a similar report to the Clyde

fishermen. Trenchant tried unsuccessfully to call up fishing vessels on a number of radio channels. The submarine reported the incident to the navy base at Faslane and continued its exercises.

Mr MacInnes said that two periods of four days would have given the fleet more chance of choosing to fish in good weather.

"If they don't cheat, the banks will repossess boats," he added.

Fishing boats likely to flout 8-day rule

By KERRY GILL AND MICHAEL HORNBY

SCOTTISH fishermen predicted yesterday that the European Community's new rule that larger boats in the North Sea and west of Scotland must tie up for eight consecutive days a month next year to conserve dwindling whitefish stocks would be widely ignored and difficult to enforce.

Leaders of Scottish fishing organisations will discuss the directives over the next few days

but yesterday some said many skippers would flout the rule. One Scottish fisherman said: "I am not going to obey. I don't see how I can."

Fishermen said the ruling would force them to go to sea in bad weather during the rest of the month to maximise their catch, making the world's most dangerous profession even more hazardous. Duncan MacInnes

secretary of the Federation of Highlands and Islands Fishermen, said: "I fear people will cheat on the eight-day lay-up period. The longer the period is, the more risk there is of men flouting the plan."

Mr MacInnes said that two periods of four days would have given the fleet more chance of choosing to fish in good weather.

"If they don't cheat, the banks will repossess boats," he added.

WEATHER

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THE TIMES WEATHER

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SATURDAY DECEMBER 22 1990

- SPORT 21-27
- RACING 26,27
- BUSINESS AND FINANCE 28-32
- WEEKEND MONEY 33-36

THE TIMES

SPORT

الجمعة 22 ديسمبر 1990

SUMMARY

Capital plan



THIS week, the British Olympic Association (BOA) agreed to accept proposals from cities wanting to host the Olympic Games in 2000. The BOA will decide which bid to endorse before the final decision on the venue for 2000 is made by the International Olympic Committee in 1993.

Sebastian Coe (above), the chairman of London Olympic 2000, makes the case for London and outlines the benefits he believes a successful bid would bring. Page 22

COMPETITION

Prize words

ON CHRISTMAS Eve, *The Times* features the classic festive test of sporting knowledge, the Jumbo Sports Crossword. Our prizes include luxury visits to some of the great forthcoming events: an England rugby international at Twickenham, football at Wembley and racing at Cheltenham.

SKIING

Fast descent



PETRA Kronberger (above), of Austria, achieved her fourth victory in six races when she won the World Cup downhill at Morzine in France yesterday. Already this season, she has won slalom, giant slalom and super giant slalom races. Report. Page 25

RUGBY UNION

Return ticket

JEFF Young was appointed the Welsh Rugby Union's technical director this week. David Hands, Rugby Correspondent, finds out why Young has decided to return to the valleys and how he hopes to help lift the veil of tears which has shrouded Wales's national game for a decade. Page 25

SPORT ON TV

Viewing figure

WAS Paul Gascoigne really the sports personality of the year, as the viewers of BBC television decided last week? And if so, why? Laura Thompson investigates. Page 26

FOOTBALL

Tactical move



WHEN Steve Perryman (above) became manager of Watford, the club seemed bound for the third division. Since his arrival last month, they have played four games without losing. Clive White talks to Perryman about his methods. Page 23

RACING

Welsh hopes

BONANZA Boy, winner of the Coral Welsh National for the past two years, will carry top weight as he seeks to become the first triple winner of the race since the war at Chepstow today. The opposition is headed by the northern challenger, Carrick Hill Lad, winner of seven of his nine steeplechases. Page 27

Hunger for success remains Faldo's major inspiration



Putting on the Ritz: Faldo, winner of the Masters and Open Championship, with the trophy he received yesterday for being named the European Golfer of the Year

By MITCHELL PLATTIS
GOLF CORRESPONDENT

NICK Faldo yesterday took time off from the dutes of Christmas shopping for his family to make clear his intention to capitalise on his achievements, and specifically his successes in this year's Masters and Open Championship, to become the dominant golfer of the 1990s.

On receiving the Ritz Club European Golfer of the Year award in London, Faldo showed that, at the age of 33, his appetite for success is far from satisfied.

Not only did he stress that he felt his best was still to come, but that he was willing to assist aspiring newcomers in order that the balance of power in terms of world golf remains firmly in Europe's corner.

"I would be quite happy to take one or two young players under my wing right now," Faldo said. "If they had the talent then I know that I could pass on so much information which would enable them to cut corners. Sometimes it takes ten years to learn this or that, and if I saw the talent in a player then I would like to help him achieve his aims."

Faldo, of course, has no intention of stepping aside himself. He unquestionably proved himself in

1990 to be the leading golfer in the world with his victories at Augusta and St Andrews. A third major title just eluded him at the US Open, where he finished a stroke behind Hale Irwin, and he won almost £200,000 in finishing twelfth in the European Order of Merit. And, in Hong Kong last week, he characteristically destroyed the fear that physical problems might cast a shadow over his future when he put together a 62 on the way to winning the Johnnie Walker Asian Classic.

Faldo was concerned by the stress fractures in his wrists, which were most probably caused by his making a minor swing change which exerted a different type of pressure on his muscles. But he has been reassured by Paul Ankers, an exercise physiologist, that by taking the next two months off to work on strengthening his arms, he will remedy the problem which led to him withdrawing from six tournaments in 1990.

"I have learned a great deal about how to look after my body and I have no fears whatsoever about my future in terms of physical fitness," Faldo said. "That would not have been the case if I had not consulted Paul because I could have done untold damage by having cortisone inject-

tions. Now I am convinced that with Paul's physical training programme I will start back in March fully fit. But I have no intention of playing the 32 tournaments that have become the norm every year since I became a professional. I want to cut back to 25 with the emphasis being on the major championships.

"But I am still as keen as ever. In fact, I am probably keener. I see now what is possible and I think that gives you the encouragement to go for it. I know so much more about playing pressures, and obviously the golf swing, although my emphasis comes with what else there is to achieve.

"The grand slam of winning all four major championships in the same year is a human possibility. But you have to have everything right. You must be playing well. You must be physically well. You must be mentally well. You must have luck. And you must not have someone else blitzing it out on the course. But I am trying to do everything to ensure that everything is right."

"I am not thinking of winning three Masters in a row, although it would be nice. I am simply looking at the Masters in April as being another major. I will go to Augusta with the memories of the two previous wins, and if I could

have a Christmas wish then it would be to win the Masters again, or the US Open. I have come close twice in the US Open and at the very least I would like to win all four of the major championships before I retire. But I am not looking at going in to even semi-retirement until after the year 2000."

Faldo, too, remains emotionally enthralled by the Ryder Cup. "It's the fifth major," he said. "It has that kind of atmosphere. At Kiawah Island in September the Americans will have to beat us, and that will put them under pressure. I cannot see many new names being in our team which is why I would love to help bring newcomers through in the future.

"We must guard against complacency and against golfers playing for a living rather than playing to win. And I know there are golfers like that out there. They play with the calculator out. I guess I was lucky to have the attitude when I started out that if I won, the money would take care of itself."

There is no question that Faldo has reaped the reward of that philosophy. He has won four major championships and his annual income is in excess of £5 million. He will receive another £500,000 over the next three years

Cricket nightmare 11 times over

SIMON BARNES
ON SATURDAY

League for the past three seasons. The team was horrified to learn that Milton Keynes Development Corporation required £350 from them for pitch hire. The club possessed a mere £70. A committee meeting was held and a sensible decision was reached. It was decided that the only thing to do was to stick the lot on a horse. This was done, taking 6-1 about Buddy Holly in the 1.45 at Plumpton last Tuesday. Oddly enough, the horse won. The team paid its debts, placed £100 behind the bar at the Cross Keys, and drank remorselessly to the health of Buddy Holly and to the prospects for next season.

Richard Edwards, who hit 62 runs off a single 11-ball over; Ivan Hutchings, who batted 26 overs for 0 not out; Eddie Hudson, who broke his leg, batted on and hit the ball of the match for six and victory; W. H. Brain, the only wicketkeeper with a first-class hat-trick of stumpings; Pat Morris, who can hold six cricket balls in each hand; W. Yardley, who bowled alternate balls with alternate arms; Alfred Myrra, who struck his long-stop on the chest with six consecutive deliveries, causing the man to spit blood for a fortnight; Charles Kortright, who bowled a bouncer that went for six byes; J. Bryant, who took 20 wickets in a match - all bowled;

and George Brown, who bowled a ball that beat wicketkeeper and batsman and killed a dog on the boundary. A nightmare 11 times over.

Hark the Herald
THIS column sends congratulations to the Herald Cricket Club, which has come bottom of the third division of the Milton Keynes Pumps Cricket

Oval gas drill

Faithful readers may recall the construction problems that affected the Oval cricket ground this summer - a completely different set of problems from Lord's. The Oval was forced to delay the opening of the new cricket centre in the summer after they discovered a subterranean pocket of methane gas beneath the building.

Even Construction announces that it has released and dispersed the gas by drilling down to it. Things should be ready in the late spring and it hopes to have the Queen at the official opening in July.

Grand-slammed

THE BBC makes quite a good thing of the way the BBC Sports Personality of the Year is selected: viewers write in and votes are counted. I confess I had always assumed that the other two awards, for Overseas Sports Personality of the Year and the team of the year, were chosen the same way. But no. These are chosen unilaterally by the BBC Sports Department. This, no doubt, accounts for Scotland's grand slam rugby team winning the team award. Unquestionably a magnificent team, its victory was watched live by a Grandstand audience of 3.7 million. The England football team's World Cup semi-final against West Germany was watched by 25.4 million, the biggest audience for a sporting event in British history. Oh, by the way, I wish the BBC good luck in all future negotiations with the sport of rugby union.

• Baffling quote of the week: From Pete Carril, basketball coach at

Princeton, preparing for the big game against University of Nevada. "We could get killed. We could get killed easily, but that's not going to knock me out of the box. It depends on how we get killed."

High earners

I would like this week to salute the punters of America's National Football League: the token pacifists in the most war-like game of them all. These are the boys who, half a dozen times a match, take the field, catch the ball and kick it from hand high up in the air. These are the skills that allow Rhone Stark of Indianapolis Colts, to earn \$415,000 a season. Sean Landeta, of New York Giants, makes \$325,000, two more punters make \$275,000, and two more make a nice round quarter-million.

Season's best

WHAT is the point of running a competition if you can't break your own rules? This week I'm giving a second trophy to Calem Coelheiros 1957 port to Robyn Williams, who offers Team Excelsior, a football team from the USA, a second Christmas and religious grounds. The line-up is: J. Priestley (Cardiff and Wales), W. Emanuel (Bristol City and Wales), T. Carroll (Plymouth and Ireland), J. Gabriel (Everton and Wales), J. King (Swansea and Wales), R. Paul (Manchester City and Wales), I. Allchurch (Cardiff and Wales), R. Hope (West Bromwich Albion and Scotland), I. St John (Liverpool and Scotland), J. Jordan (Leeds and Scotland) and T. Godwin (Leeds and Scotland). The manager is Noel Cantwell and the home ground is Vicarage Road, Watford.

Happy Christmas.

Stewart's health a new blow

From ALAN LEE
CRICKET CORRESPONDENT
BALLARAT

ENGLAND'S cricket tour descended still further into chaos yesterday as Micky Stewart, the team manager, was admitted to hospital for tests on a mysterious numbing condition and Allan Lamb, the vice-captain, was injured while running back to the squad's motel in Ballarat immediately after scoring a fine 141 against Victoria.

Stewart's condition initially caused some alarm. A chest infection which had restricted him last week had given way to a lack of feeling in his right leg. An invertebrate trainer, Stewart, aged 54, had been inhibited during the team's practices and eventually agreed to return to Melbourne to see a specialist.

Tests were taken in a private hospital and Stewart was also given cortisone injections, but the physician could find nothing seriously wrong and the manager was expected to rejoin his team today. What he would find may not have pleased him. Lamb batted superbly against Victoria, having come in with England at 21 for two in reply to a declaration at 441 for seven. But in straining to run the five miles from the Ballarat ground back to the team's motel so soon after his innings, he repeated the calf injury he sustained on a similar run in Barbados earlier this year.

Lamb, the only man to have scored a first-class century for England on tour, was under treatment last night but is expected to play in the second Test, starting in Melbourne on Boxing Day, even if not fully fit - a measure of England's current strife.

England's recovery. Page 22

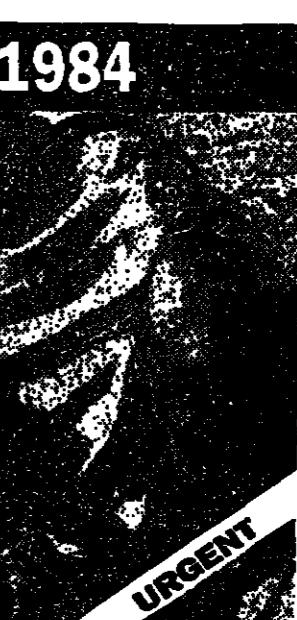
Eubank to face new challenger

CHRIS Eubank will face a new opponent, yet to be announced, for the first defence of his World Boxing Organisation (WBO) middleweight title at the Brighton Centre on February 23.

Kevin Watts, the originally named American challenger, is no longer considered a worthy enough opponent for the Brighton boxer by the WBO after being knocked out in his last contest.

Watts is rated the WBO No. 3 challenger but is listed at No. 24 by the more respected World Boxing Council. A possible contender for Eubank is another American, Doug DeWitt, who lost the title when knocked out in the eighth round by Nigel Benn in Atlantic City last April.

Eubank's defence in Brighton will be the first world title bout ever to be staged in Sussex, and Barry Hearn, the promoter, has said that two other contests in April and June should be worth £1 million to Eubank.



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CRISIS IN AFRICA

Why a vote for London is an Olympic winner

Here's a news quiz question for this week. What have these countries in common, after a decision last Wednesday – Australia, Canada, China, Germany and Great Britain? The answer of course, is that they are all getting ready to bid for the coveted prize of staging the Olympic Games in the year 2000.

This week, the British Olympic Association agreed to accept proposals from British cities to join the race for the International Olympic Committee's nomination in 1993.

Let me declare an interest. I am chairman of London Olympic 2000, the campaign to bring the Games to London – so mine is not an objective view. The campaign has powerful support in the shape of the Central Council for Physical Recreation, the representative organisation of this country's sporting bodies. The CCPR provides invaluable knowledge and expertise and a forum for the interchange of views we need – within sport and outside – to put together the right package.

Why bid for the Games? I suggest four main reasons.

First, a major aim must be to re-establish Britain's old place in the international arena of sport. Once, we made the rules of most of the great sports of today; once, ours were the leading administrators in international governing bodies; once, we had many more respected voices than we have now in the various forums of sport, helping to shape international policies and programmes.

That was once upon a time. If I may continue the pantomime language, we are now the "Sleeping Beauty" that needs the kiss of success to reawaken our old influence and prestige. What better "kiss" than that of the IOC, bestowing the gift of the Olympic Games, at the start of a new century?

Second, I believe that hosting the Games here again would be a great opportunity to reinvigorate British sport. We need new facilities. We want a fresh surge of confidence. We yearn for the kind of challenge that brings out the best in Britain and especially in British sport.

Third, we have the history, tradition and expertise to stage a magnificent Games, in the full



COMMENT
SEBASTIAN COE

spirit of the Olympic Charter – to launch the movement into the 21st century, just as London launched it into the post-war world in 1948.

Fourth, the Games would be a unique marketing opportunity for Britain, at the start of the 21st century. For the year 2000, and especially for the three weeks of the Games, the eyes of the world would be drawn here. We would be centre stage with all the advantages that means for selling this country and its industries and products.

So, the 2000 Games would do much for us, in Britain and in sport; but equally we would do much, again, for the Olympic flag and all it stands for.

The BOA has decided that our London team can bid, and so, of course, can other cities. Manchester wants to have another

chance. ours will be a friendly, domestic rivalry. We have one main aim in common – to win the Games for Britain. That is the major goal and I know that whatever wins next April will support the other city's cause over the succeeding two and a bit years.

The BOA has laid down criteria for us in preparing our bid. I believe these are reasonable and I support the council's proper caution (after two failures, with Birmingham and Manchester) and also its judgement about the key elements in any proposal equipped to fight a good fight for the IOC's vote.

I understand that the criteria are, in fact, those we laid down for ourselves, in London, when we launched the campaign back in September. Briefly, there must be a mix of new and existing

facilities, with some benefits for sport and the city out of the bidding process itself; there must be sufficient funds for a lively, effective campaign; there should be political support; the bid has to be credible, a likely winner.

So what happens next? The first task in London is to bring together in one vibrant campaign the different groups and interests. My co-ordinating committee (comprising active and committed Olympians and sportsmen and women like Ginny Long, Gary Lineker, Daley Thompson and Virginia Wade, and with heavyweight representatives from vital bodies like London Transport, the London Tourist Board and the London Docklands Development Corporation) has authorised David Feasdale, the director and myself, to get together with the others interested in a London bid and to agree a common approach.

The talks are already under way, with Tarmac, who are leading a construction consortium, and the London Council for Sport and Recreation, and I believe they will have a positive outcome. The collective resolve

between the London boroughs and between the governing bodies of sport.

This is not a private venture. Staging an Olympic Games involves the co-operation and commitment of the host city and country. We shall need hundreds of volunteers to operate the many different parts of the event's systems. We shall require political will and effort, at local and national level. The Games are about the community; they are an opportunity for the community to show its best, to the world.

Why London? Simply, because London has the history and tradition; we have staged the Games twice before and in 1948 we helped re-establish the momentum of the movement after the second world war. Because we have the heavyweight financial and operational expertise. Because we already have some renowned facilities that will grace the Games. Because we are already a major sporting centre. And because I believe that only London, with its unique status and prestige, can take on the exciting global competition that lies ahead in the race for AD 2000.

Ill-fated Lamb dishes up a roasting

From ALAN LEE
CRICKET CORRESPONDENT
BALLARAT

LIFE has not been serene for Allan Lamb on this tormented England tour. On the day he chose to remind Australia that they do not hold a monopoly on the Dean Jones school of artful aggression, fate was lurking to floor him again.

Lamb's second-day century, as England made 220 for three against Victoria, was scored at a speed and style to equal anything Jones achieved the previous day. It was intimidating in its command, and, however briefly, it lifted the sense of oppression weighing on this England team.

But even the good days are bad for England and within an hour of holing out to Jones's occasional off spin for a vivid 141, Lamb was hobbling back into the team's motel with a calf injury from which he is unlikely to make a full recovery before the Test match in Melbourne on Boxing Day.

Despite having batted for almost three hours, Lamb elected to run the five miles back from the ground, an admirable concept in theory but one which has caused him grief before. In Barbados, 11 months ago, he tripped off a pavement and damaged his calf. Yesterday, he repeated the performance.

Laurie Brown, the team's physiotherapist and busiest man in the party, treated the injury with ice and then intimated that Lamb would regard it as an inconvenience but not a deterrent. "We could have done without it and there is certainly a chance he will not be properly fit for Wednesday. But that will not necessarily stop him playing."

Poor Lamb. Quite apart from inheriting the captaincy at a time which suited neither his own style nor England's needs, he has been afflicted on this tour by problems with his eyes, his face and his neck. There are times when he has looked thoroughly miserable and yet he remains, as yesterday's innings proved, England's best chance of taking on the Australians at their own abrasive batting game. And now this.

On top of everything else yesterday, the depicted party temporarily lost its team manager. Micky Stewart had for three days been suffering numbness in his right leg, inhibiting him at practice, in which he loves to be involved, and causing him obvious concern.

VICTORIA: First Innings	
G M Watt	10 Atherton
G Ayres	c Tufnell b Atherton
D M Smith	c Tufnell b Atherton
D S Lehmann	run out
J D Studdon	c Russell b Tufnell
B P O'Donnell	c Tufnell b Atherton
M G Hughes	not out
Extras (b 6, w 1, nb 5)	23
Total (7 wkt dec)	441
WICKETS:	1-124, 2-301, 3-308, 4-319, 5-342, 6-367, 7-375, 8-382, 9-385, 10-395-2; Small 13-23-0; Bicknell 27-31-0; Tufnell 38-12-2; Atherton 19-2-78-2.
ENGLAND: First Innings	7
M A Gooch	run out
J M Atherton	c and b Fleming
A J Stewart	c and b Fleming
T R Jackson	c and b Fleming
Extras (1 b, 2 w, 1 nb 5)	9
Total (3 wkt dec)	220
WICKETS:	1-124, 2-301, 3-308, 4-319, 5-342, 6-367, 7-375, 8-382, 9-385, 10-395-2; Small 13-23-0; Bicknell 27-31-0; Tufnell 38-12-2; Atherton 19-2-78-2.

He travelled back to Melbourne yesterday, where he underwent tests but despite being detained overnight in a private hospital, he will rejoin the squad today with a specialist's report indicating nothing worse than the side effects of a chest infection.

Nobody could have blamed

Stewart had his condition been a by-product of the stress involved in running this team. It must be like waking up every morning not confident your car is going to start and, even if it does, how far it will get you. It was all very well sustaining the thought that one good win, one good day, could turn the tour around. It had become a question of doubting whether such a phenomenon was possible, a fear which yesterday's events only partly relieved.

The fact that Lamb is

responsible for the entire tally of first-class centuries on tour, now standing at a meagre three, is not cause to raise a glass. One man may be doing his job commendably well; too many more are failing down.

Almost the same thing can be said of the bowling, where only Fraser and Tufnell presently merit much trust, so even if one adds the consistent excellence of Russell's wicketkeeping, England are approaching the Melbourne Test match with no more than Atherton completed 50.

But for Atherton, too, this was an important day of retrenchment and if his unbeaten 59 in four hours was not altogether to the liking of the 4,000 crowd, it would serve an admirable purpose come next Wednesday in the dire circumstances to which England have become accustomed.



With not so much as a glance at Jones: Lamb lifts up English hearts with a century

Stephenson stands by to lead tour

By RICHARD STREETON

JOHN Stephenson, the Essex opening batsman, who has been coaching and playing in Queensland club cricket, has been put on standby to lead England A on their nine-week tour to Pakistan and Sri Lanka in the new year. Stephenson, aged 25, will take over if Hugh Morris, the designated A team captain, is kept in Australia as a replacement batsman.

Stephenson, who has the advantage of being match fit and acclimatised, will return to London to leave with the A team on January 7, if necessary.

Morris, who was summoned as a replacement to Australia when Gooch injured his hand last month, has hardly played a match. He has looked in good order, though, at practice and following Larkins's struggle to find form, the tour management could decide to keep him in Australia.

Stephenson was considered unfortunate to miss A team selection after averaging 54.06 last summer with Essex, when he scored three centuries and 13 fifties. He is also a useful partnership breaker as a medium-pace bowler and proved a good tourist with the A side in Zimbabwe last winter.

More importantly, perhaps, as a captain, Stephenson was a proven success, first with Dur-

Records fall to brothers

PERTH (Reuter) – Mark and Steve Waugh, the twin brothers, eclipsed two of the most notable names in first-class cricket history as they shared a record fifth-wicket stand of 464 for New South Wales against Western Australia in the Sheffield Shield yesterday.

The partnership exceeded the previous fifth-wicket record of 405, set by Sir Donald Bradman and Sid Barnes for Australia against England in the 1946-7 season. It also beat the previous Australian record for any wicket, topping the 462 made by David Hookes and Wayne Phillips for South Australia in the 1986-7 season.

New South Wales declared their first innings at 601 for four, with Mark Waugh 229 not out and Steve unbeaten on 216.

Neither of the brothers, aged 25, offered a chance on their way to career-best individual scores. Mark, who played for Essex fast bowlers, became only the eleventh Australian to score more than 3,000 first-class runs in a calendar year. The pair batted on after it was established the record of Hookes and Phillips was within reach. The declaration came as soon as the milestone had been passed.

The stand was the eleventh highest first-class partnership for any wicket.

PANGSTAR

Sead Armer

c Younus b Latif

Latif run out

Sid Malik

c Jayasena b Armer

Armer run out

Jaz Ahmed

not out

Wasim Akram

c Younus b Armer

Armer run out

Mushab Ahmed

run out

Wasim Younis

not out

Wasim Younis

c Armer b Armer

Armer run out

Armer

c Younus b Armer

RUGBY UNION

Season of goodwill brings charitable flavour to fixtures

By DAVID HANDS, RUGBY CORRESPONDENT

IF IT is any comfort to such clubs as Pontypool, who this week lost Keith Orrell, their leading try-scorer, to Newport — the fourth such "exchange" this season — the anxieties over player movement, which have caused so many furrowed brows to present-day rugby administrators, is nothing new.

A newspaper report in 1898 of a game between Blackheath and Richmond, then considerable powers in the land, said that the "gravitation of good players to powerful sides is human nature, and will ever be so... We do not know of a club which does not do the same. The field is open. There is nothing required for enlistment in the shape of an emolument in our game... though very uncharitable remarks from time to time appear with regard to the recruiting of these, the two old clubs in the world."

Perhaps during the festive season it is appropriate to suggest that some things appear to stay the same, whatever new commercial connotations are applied both

to the season and the sport.

Over Christmas, too, English clubs revert to what now must be described as "friendly" fixtures, as distinct from the presumably, unfriendly competitive ones.

Coventry have been playing Leicester for a century and continue the series today at Coundon Road with a XV including Wilkes at prop.

Leicester will miss Wells and Richards, both recovering from injury, from their back row, so Marriot and Grant play in a team which otherwise bears a close resemblance to that likely to play the Barbarians on December 27 — a match for which all tickets have been sold.

Nottingham, who entertain Headingley, have reshuffled their back row to permit the inclusion of Richardson, the Loughborough student, at open-side flanker, and Charles — normally a No. 8 — on the blind side. Kilford, Gregory and Taylor return from warming the divisional bench, while the Yorkshire club includes Radacanu, the Romanian lock.

Australians recall retired Poidevin

SIMON Poidevin, capped 51 times by Australia and with one retirement already in his tucker bag, was included yesterday in his country's reconstituted squad of 36 for the 1991 World Cup (David Hands writes).

Poidevin, the flanker whose efficient year have included his autobiography, is one of seven survivors from the 1984 Wallabies party which achieved the grand slam on tour in Britain and Ireland.

In refining an original squad of 45, the Australian selectors have tried to blend old with new. There are, for instance, a dozen members of the Emerging Australians party which toured Europe last month, among them the young Eastwood full back, Tim Kelaher, who made such an impression in first-class rugby during the absence of the experienced Marty Roebuck.

The squad will be reviewed again in June, before the arrival in Australia of England and

Wales; the Wallabies play an international match against each of them. By that time, too, the Emerging Australians will have been in action against a touring French under-23 side which is proposing to make a tour of the southern-hemisphere in May.

Australia's final squad will play in the two-match Bledisloe Cup series with New Zealand in August, when the All Blacks play Australia B in Bristol on August 11, and Australia in Sydney on August 10. New Zealand play the Wallabies in Auckland on August 24, and offer a warm-up game against Counties on August 20.

Northampton have Pearce back in the front row after injury for their game with London Irish and Shrewsbury, who will be qualified to play in their first league match by January 12, when Northampton play Leicester, it is in the back row. However, Oliver and Rodger are recovering from injuries and the Irish are weakened by the absence of their Ireland B representatives and the injured three-quarters, Staples and Geoghegan.

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What sort of match this turns out to be depends on which pose Swans are happy to strike. They have the infinite capacity to thrill or disappoint. Arthur Emry is back on the wing to stir up the action, especially as he plays the first international against England on the horizon. He has his point to make.

At any rate, the Christmas period will provide Davies with the opportunity of establishing his credentials. He faces the former Welsh stand-off half, Malcolm Dacey, today, while the contest at scrum half between Chris Bridges and Robert Jones is also of national curiosity.

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Bonanza Boy to complete treble

By MANDARIN

BONANZA Boy, whose prospects have been greatly improved by this week's rain, can complete a Coral Welsh National treble at Chepstow this afternoon.

Martin Pipe's nine-year-old put up one of the outstanding performances of last season to defend 11s 11lb in the corresponding race 12 months ago but failed to reproduce that form subsequently in the Gold Cup, Grand National and Scottish National.

As a result of those disappointing efforts, Bonanza Boy is now able to race off an official handicap mark 4lb lower than when beating Cool Ground by 15 lengths a year ago. The latter has only a 3lb pull in the weights today.

This season, Bonanza Boy has produced two satisfactory performances when finishing third to the race-fit Celtic Shot on his reappearance at Haydock and when chasing home Boraceva in the three-mile Rehearsal Chase over



De Haan: reunited with Bonanza Boy

today's course three weeks ago.

Strictly on the book, Boraceva is entitled to confirm those placings on 3lb better terms but Bonanza Boy was beaten for speed at the end of a slowly-run race that day and, with a greater emphasis on stamina here, is fancied to take his revenge, especially as Toby Balding's charge is not the most reliable of jumpers.

Bearing in mind that the top weight would have incurred a 4lb penalty if unsuccessful in the Rehearsal, Ben de Haan was not unduly hard on Bonanza Boy once Boraceva had passed him and that should pay dividends today. De Haan, successful in the race eight years ago on Corbiere, again partners Bonanza Boy.

Carrick Hill Lad, a grand type of horse, has been cleverly placed by Gordon Richards to win seven of his nine races and could yet develop into a Cheltenham Gold Cup candidate.

However, he met defeat in his two most searching tests at Ascot and Ayr last season and cannot be guaranteed to last out this very demanding 34 miles against horses of proven stamina such as Bonanza Boy, Cool Ground and Boraceva.

Pipe has outstanding chances in each of the first four races on today's programme and I expect him to enjoy earlier success with Rehearsal in the Finale Ju-

nior Hurdle and Granville Novices' Hurdle Qualifier.

The winner of eight of her nine races this season, Hopscotch suffered her only defeat when fifth to Native Mission at Wetherby in November.

She has 10½ lengths to make

up on runner-up Dawson City

on that running but has an 8lb

pull in the weights and has

improved since with emphatic

successes at Cheltenham (twice) and Sandown.

Granville Again looked an

outstanding prospect last

season when winning National Hunt flat races at Leop-

ardstown and Navan and

finishing second in a winners'

bumper at Phoenix Park.

The Deep Run four-year-old has, by all accounts, schooled exceptionally well and, if transferring his bumper form to hurdles, should have the measure of Southern Supreme and Child Of The Mist.

Pipe saddles the assured favourite for the Racing Interna-

tional Hurdle in Run For

Free but the six-year-old may

have been slightly flattered by

his recent Haydock victory

over Mole Board and Beech

Road.

Jenny Pitman sees a real poser by opposing Run For Free with four of her exciting Weathercock House team and Devil's Valley is nominated as the pick of the quartet.

A good sixth to Regal Ambition in the Sun Alliance

Hurdle last season, Devil's

Valley held an excellent

chance two out and will

appreciate the return to two

miles.

Whatever the fate of the Pipe team at Chepstow, he should be among the winners elsewhere with Monday Club (12-5) and William Anthony (11-5) at Lingfield and Sweet N' Twenty (2-5) at Hereford all holding clear chances.

Mary Revey and Peter

Niven, both enjoying out-

standing seasons, again look

the combination to follow at

Edinburgh with Inverloch (12-5) and Mig (2-5).

BBC1

1.55 CORAL WELSH NATIONAL (Handicap Chase: Grade III: £22,958; 3m 6f) (14 runners)

1 100P-32 BONANZA BOY 21 (CD,BF,F,G,S) (S Dunster) M Pipe 9-11-10	B de Haan	97
2 3320P-3 YAHOO 21 (F,G,S) (A Parker) J Edwards 9-11-6	N Williamson	93
3 1132-11 GARRICK HILL LAD 21 (C,G,S) (A Picken) G Richards 7-10-11	N Doughty	99
4 51FP-64 ENVOPAK TOKEN 14 (F,G,S) (F Arthur) J Gifford 9-10-4		87
5 534P-1F1 BORACEVA 21 (C,F,G,S) (Duke of Argyll) G Baking 7-10-2 (4ex)	J Frost	97
6 2144-3 COOL GROUND 30 (C,G,S) (Whitcombe Mem Ldr) R Akehurst 8-10-0	L Harvey	95
7 02133-5 ROWLANDSONS JEWELS 14 (F,G,S) (Rowlands Mem Ldr) D Murray Smith 9-10-0	G Bradley	89
8 5-61222 CLOONEY GRANGE 20 (B,F,S) (E O'Dwyer) J O'Connor (tre) 11-10-0	D O'Connor	90
9 40P-422 MICK'S STAR 9 (G,S) (P Bancroft) Mrs J Pitman 10-10-0	M Bowby	86
10 4P-32L2 OUTSIDE EDGE 9 (S,S) (B Klopstok) M Pipe 9-10-0	J Lower	89
11 400P-3 L'ANE ROUGE 10 (S,F) (P Green) M Pipe 9-10-0	R Dunwoody	80
12 24F-121 ROYAL BATTERY 28 (G) (Mrs P Cottle) D Berons 7-10-0	R Greene	77
13 20211/1 FLYING GOD 15 (F,G,S) (J Warren) J Baker 10-10-0	S Bamforth	68
14 53015-4 THE QUOHEE 15 (C,S) (B Jones) J Baker 8-10-0	Mr R Farrant	75

Long handicap Cool Ground 9-13, Rowlands JEWEL 9-8, Clooney Grange 9-5, Mick's Star 8-4, Outside Edge 9-2, L'ane Rouge 9-1, Royal Battery 8-0, Flying God 8-0, The Quohee.

BETTING: 11-4 Carrick Hill Lad, 4-1 Boraceva, 5-1 Cool Ground, 6-1 Bonanza Boy, 12-1 Envopak Token, 14-1 Mick's Star, 16-1 Yahoo, 20-1 Outside Edge, Royal Battery, 25-1 L'ane Rouge, Rowlands JEWELs, 33-1 Clooney Grange, 86-1 Flying God, 200-1 The Quohee.

1983: BONANZA BOY 8-11-11 P Scudamore (15-6 fav) M Pipe 12 ran

CHEPSTOW

Selections
By Mandarin

12.20 Hopscotch.
12.50 Granville Again.
1.20 Devil's Valley.

By Michael Seely

12.20 Dawson City, 1.55 CARRICK HILL LAD (nap).

The Times Private Handicapper's top rating: 1.55 CARRICK HILL LAD.

Guide to our in-line racecard

1 1132-11 GOOD TIMES 13 (B,F,G,S) (Mrs D Robins) B Hall 12-0

B West

75

Descriptor number. Figurine form (P) fell, (D) went down, S slipped up, R refused.

Horse's name. Days since last outing: 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th, 9th, 10th, 11th, 12th, 13th, 14th, 15th, 16th, 17th, 18th, 19th, 20th, 21st, 22nd, 23rd, 24th, 25th, 26th, 27th, 28th, 29th, 30th, 31st, 32nd, 33rd, 34th, 35th, 36th, 37th, 38th, 39th, 40th, 41st, 42nd, 43rd, 44th, 45th, 46th, 47th, 48th, 49th, 50th, 51st, 52nd, 53rd, 54th, 55th, 56th, 57th, 58th, 59th, 60th, 61st, 62nd, 63rd, 64th, 65th, 66th, 67th, 68th, 69th, 70th, 71st, 72nd, 73rd, 74th, 75th, 76th, 77th, 78th, 79th, 80th, 81st, 82nd, 83rd, 84th, 85th, 86th, 87th, 88th, 89th, 90th, 91st, 92nd, 93rd, 94th, 95th, 96th, 97th, 98th, 99th, 100th, 101st, 102nd, 103rd, 104th, 105th, 106th, 107th, 108th, 109th, 110th, 111th, 112th, 113th, 114th, 115th, 116th, 117th, 118th, 119th, 120th, 121st, 122nd, 123rd, 124th, 125th, 126th, 127th, 128th, 129th, 130th, 131st, 132nd, 133rd, 134th, 135th, 136th, 137th, 138th, 139th, 140th, 141st, 142nd, 143rd, 144th, 145th, 146th, 147th, 148th, 149th, 150th, 151st, 152nd, 153rd, 154th, 155th, 156th, 157th, 158th, 159th, 160th, 161st, 162nd, 163rd, 164th, 165th, 166th, 167th, 168th, 169th, 170th, 171st, 172nd, 173rd, 174th, 175th, 176th, 177th, 178th, 179th, 180th, 181st, 182nd, 183rd, 184th, 185th, 186th, 187th, 188th, 189th, 190th, 191st, 192nd, 193rd, 194th, 195th, 196th, 197th, 198th, 199th, 200th, 201st, 202nd, 203rd, 204th, 205th, 206th, 207th, 208th, 209th, 210th, 211st, 212nd, 213rd, 214th, 215th, 216th, 217th, 218th, 219th, 220th, 221st, 222nd, 223rd, 224th, 225th, 226th, 227th, 228th, 229th, 230th, 231st, 232nd, 233rd, 234th, 235th, 236th, 237th, 238th, 239th, 240th, 241st, 242nd, 243rd, 244th, 245th, 246th, 247th, 248th, 249th, 250th, 251st, 252nd, 253rd, 254th, 255th, 256th, 257th, 258th, 259th, 260th, 261st, 262nd, 263rd, 264th, 265th, 266th, 267th, 268th, 269th, 270th, 271st, 272nd, 273rd, 274th, 275th, 276th, 277th, 278th, 279th, 280th, 281st, 282nd, 283rd, 284th, 285th, 286th, 287th, 288th, 289th, 290th, 291st, 292nd, 293rd, 294th, 295th, 296th, 297th, 298th, 299th, 300th, 301st, 302nd, 303rd, 304th, 305th, 306th, 307th, 308th, 309th, 310th, 311st, 312nd, 313rd, 314th, 315th, 316th, 317th, 318th, 319th, 320th, 321st, 322nd, 323rd, 324th, 325th, 326th, 327th, 328th, 329th, 330th, 331st, 332nd, 333rd, 334th, 335th, 336th, 337th, 338th, 339th, 340th, 341st, 342nd, 343rd, 344th, 345th, 346th, 347th, 348th, 349th, 350th, 351st, 352nd, 353rd, 354th, 355th, 356th, 357th, 358th, 359th, 360th, 361st, 362nd, 363rd, 364th, 365th, 366th, 367th, 368th, 369th, 370th, 371st, 372nd, 373rd, 374th, 375th, 376th, 377th, 378th, 379th, 380th, 381st, 382nd, 383rd, 384th, 385th, 386th, 387th, 388th, 389th, 390th, 391st, 392nd, 393rd, 394th, 395th, 396th, 397th, 398th, 399th, 400th, 401st, 402nd, 403rd, 404th, 405th, 406th, 407th, 408th, 409th, 410th, 411st, 412nd, 413rd, 414th, 415th, 416th, 417th, 418th, 419th, 420th, 421st, 422nd, 423rd, 424th, 425th, 426th, 427th, 428th, 429th, 430th, 431st, 432nd, 433rd, 434th, 435th, 436th, 437th, 438th, 439th, 440th, 441st, 442nd, 443rd, 444th, 445th, 446th, 447th, 448th, 449th, 450th, 451st, 452nd, 453rd, 454th, 455th, 456th, 457th, 458th, 459th, 460th, 461st, 462nd, 463rd, 464th, 465th, 466th, 467th, 468th, 469th, 470th, 471st, 472nd, 473rd, 474th, 475th, 476th, 477th, 478th, 479th, 480th, 481st, 482nd, 483rd, 484th, 485th, 486th, 487th, 488th, 489th, 490th, 491st, 492nd, 493rd, 494th, 495th, 496th, 497th, 498th, 499th, 500th, 501st, 502nd, 503rd, 504th, 505th, 506th, 507th, 508th, 509th, 510th, 511st, 512nd, 513rd, 514th, 515th, 516th, 517th, 518th, 519th, 520th, 521st, 522nd, 523rd, 524th, 525th, 526th, 527th, 528th, 529th, 530th, 531st, 532nd, 533rd, 534th, 535th, 536th, 537th, 538

Foseco falls to Burmah in fight that went to the last round

By MARTIN BARROW

BURMAH Castrol, the lubricants group, has secured a surprisingly comfortable victory in its £259 million takeover battle for Foseco, the specialist chemicals concern.

Burmah declared the offer unconditional yesterday after receiving acceptances in respect of 33.6 per cent of Foseco for its 300p a share cash offer. This gave Burmah, which acquired just under 30 per cent of its target in the market during the course of the bid, a

total of 63.5 per cent. By mid-afternoon Mr Long, the chairman of Foseco, had conceded defeat and was meeting Lawrence Urquhart, his opposite number at Burmah, at Burmah's London office in Mount Street to secure "an orderly transition."

Mr Long said: "We believe we won the balance of the argument but recognise the performance that cash is king. However, we would like to pay tribute to the numerous shareholders who took a longer term view and remained loyal throughout the bid."

Analysis had predicted a tight finish to the bid after a late rally by Foseco supporters to preserve the company's independence. Their campaign gained momentum when M&G Fund Management said it would support the existing management.

However, support was swept in the opposite direction after Phillips & Drew Fund Management and Hill Samuel sided with Burmah.

Burmah's successful offer represents an exit multiple of 11.1 times 1990 earnings, based on Foseco's own forecast

of 27.1p a share that was issued as part of its defence.

Although some institutions believed the final offer was low — Burmah's initial offer was worth 275p a share — the majority voted in favour of accepting the cash instead of putting their faith in Foseco's ability to extract greater value from the business by disposing of several substantial assets. The day before the bid Foseco shares traded at 186p.

Jonathan Fry, managing director of Burmah, said: "We were all on tenterhooks because the outcome was decided

on the last day. It seems a lot of decisions were a close call. But in the end the margin of our success vindicates all our pleas to the market."

The takeover bid for Foseco was launched in October before Mr Long, a former director of BAT Industries, had formally taken over as chairman. He was immediately faced with the difficult task of defending a lacklustre record in a year when both profits and earnings were expected to fall sharply.

Charles Pack, the Nomura analyst, had anticipated taxable profits of £35 million this year, against £46.2 million in 1989, with earnings falling from 30.3p a share to 21.5p.

After receiving negligible acceptances by the first closing date, Burmah increased its offer by 25p to 300p. Foseco's response to the bids was to offer for sale its interests in construction, chemicals and abrasives to concentrate on its core metallurgical businesses. The company pledged to pay a special dividend of 20p a share and to use the proceeds of the main disposals to buy in a large slice of its own shares.

TED BARTH

Pound firmer despite £971m trade deficit

By ANATOLE KALETSKY, ECONOMICS EDITOR

BRITAIN'S current account deficit narrowed last month to £971 million from £1.06 billion as imports of manufactures fell sharply while exports remained on a high plateau.

Although the trade gap was bigger than the £800 million market forecast, the pound rose encouragingly against a floundering mark.

The German currency continued to be hit by the political turmoil in Moscow, and the dollar, which benefited from worries about the Soviet Union, rose even more rapidly than sterling.

Nevertheless, sterling's ability to bounce back to DM2.88, after a low of about DM2.85 on Wednesday, revived hopes that the pound might finally have reached a sustainable level in the European exchange-rate mechanism. A period of exchange rate stability has been established by government officials as the main precondition for an interest rate cut.

The cumulative current account deficit for the first 11 months of the year was £14.96 billion, suggesting that the Treasury's 1990 deficit forecast of £15.5 billion, published less than two months ago, is likely to be missed, albeit by a small margin. However, next year's forecast of £11 billion could prove more realistic, since it would imply virtually no further improvement in the trade performance.

Gordon Brown, Labour's trade and industry spokesman,

said, the data had "economic failure" written all over them. "The figures mark a poor end to one of the worst years in Britain's trading history."

November's visible trade deficit was identical with the account deficit at £971 million, since government statisticians estimated that invisible trade in finance, services and interest payments had been roughly in balance in the past two months. The narrowing of the deficit between October and November resulted from a ½ per cent drop in imports to £9.76 billion and a ½ per cent rise in exports to £8.79 billion.

In terms of the three-month averages that government statisticians believe give a better guide to the economy's underlying performance, imports, excluding erratic items, were 4½ per cent lower in the latest three-month period than in the one before, while exports were 1½ per cent higher. Compared with a year earlier, in the latest three months, non-erratic imports were also 4½ per cent down, while exports were 7 per cent up.

The total current account deficit for the past three months was £2.75 billion, the smallest three-month figure since February 1988. The three-month visible trade deficit, at £2.84 billion, was down to 91.5 in October, from 92.5 the month before.

The shorter leading indicator, which signals turning points in the economy about six months in advance, fell even more sharply to 90.7 from 91.8. The longer leading indicator, which tends to start rising about 12 months before the end of a recession, rose slightly to 93.4 (93.2 in September) but this move was considered too small to be statistically significant.

• The French trade deficit in November fell sharply and unexpectedly to Fr601 million compared with Fr6.69 billion in October. Economists had expected a result of about Fr6 billion. The figures seemed to reflect destocking in the corporate sector.



All hands on deck: Charlotte Tester copes with some of the hectic business at NatWest's personal dealing operation in Mansell Street

Nadir colleague agrees to talk to fraud squad

By NEIL BENNETT

ELIZABETH Forsyth, a central figure in the Poly Peck affair, has agreed to talk to the Serious Fraud Office in the New Year.

A statement from Lane and Partners, her solicitor, said she had agreed a "mutually convenient date" to be interviewed, but her spokesman declined to say when this would be.

Mrs Forsyth was the chairman of South Audley Management, the company that ran private trusts belonging to Asil Nadir, Poly Peck's chairman. An SFO raid on South Audley's headquarters led to a collapse in Poly Peck's share price and to the appointment of receivers to the group.

Mr Stone said the only free capital in the group was in the form of deposits on 12 developments in Cyprus and Turkey, which the administrators are negotiating to free.

Britain last week and has since been taking refuge at her five-bedroomed Georgian house in Grantham.

Meanwhile, Richard Stone, one of Poly Peck International's administrators, said he was trying to unlock up to £30 million from planned property developments in northern Cyprus and Turkey to fund working capital in Vestel and Samsung, the group's electronics subsidiaries.

Mr Stone said the only free capital in the group was in the form of deposits on 12 developments in Cyprus and Turkey, which the administrators are negotiating to free.

Mrs Forsyth returned to

NatWest scores record volume in power shares

By MARTIN WALLER

A TOTAL of 50,000 people sold their electricity shares through the branches of National Westminster Bank yesterday, while almost 50 million shares went through the stock market as a whole.

NatWest hired an extra 30 dealing staff, virtually doubling the numbers at the headquarters of its Touchscreen personal dealing operation at Mansell Street in the City.

The bank's stockbroking arm is claiming an 18 per cent share of the market in electricity shares yesterday.

But although the volume of business at NatWest was of

peace as the market braced itself for retail investors to sell.

But the shares have been well supported by suggestions of stake-building, and some of the buying is thought to have come from across the Atlantic.

Talks are continuing into the new year, meanwhile, between the government's advisers and the next two companies due off the privatisation slipway, National Power and PowerGen, the generators.

The talks are being described as "very robust" and "tough but fair," which suggests to observers some bone-crunching negotiations at the energy department.

The issues that must be settled by January 18, when the pathfinder prospectus for the two goes to the printers, is dividend and profits forecasts and their capital structure.

The question of what debts they will take on has largely been settled, although the two companies are reserving the right to renegotiate the accepted figure of £700 million during the current negotiations.

Astra reshape cuts £79m from deficit

By JONATHAN PRYNN

ASTRA Holdings, the loss-making munitions group, has announced a capital reconstruction that will reduce the £83 million deficit on its revenue account to only £4.1 million.

The deficit was built up through accumulated losses, including a £65 million extraordinary write-off last year related to the closure of a Belgian subsidiary involved in the Iraqi supergun affair.

The reconstruction involves an application to the High Court to have the nominal value of the company's ordinary shares reduced from 25p to 10p and for the share premium account to be cancelled. This will allow Astra to transfer £79.5 million to its profit and loss account, reducing the deficit to £4.1 million.

The reconstruction will bring the company a step closer to

paying a dividend, once it returns to trading profits. However, Roy Barber, the chairman, said his "first, second and third priority" would be to reduce Astra's £40 million debt burden to manageable levels before any dividend payment could be considered.

Astra also announced a record order book in America due to increased demand for its explosives since the American military build-up in the Gulf.

Astra said it had received one \$18 million order from the American defence department and had "further potentially large orders in the discussion stage". In addition the company said its British order book was improving.

The new business was announced as Astra unveiled reduced pre-tax losses of £2.5 million for the six months to end-September against £3.4 million last time. The company made a £65.2 million attributable loss in the 1989-90 financial year. Turnover increased by 12 per cent to £44.3 million. There is no interim dividend (nil).

Mr Barber said a cost-saving programme begun this year will have reduced the company's cost base by £10 million a year by March. The company also intends to sell off "non-core and non-income producing assets". However, no offers have yet been received for any of these assets, Mr Barber said.

He added that: "The combination of a sound industrial base and viable order book means that the company is now positioned to look to the future."

The shares increased 3p to 12.5p.

Freemans meets the Christmas rush

By GILLIAN BOWDITCH



Mailing to order: Mike Hawker, of Freemans, which is open seven days a week

director of Freemans, said: "This has been a very successful year for us and business in the past two weeks has been particularly strong. Lingerie, toys and jewellery are among the best selling lines, with lingerie up 40 per cent on last year." Teenage Mutant Hero Turtle merchandise is also selling well.

Shoppers tend to order Christmas goods from mail order companies early to ensure they arrive in time. Mr Hawker said 90 per cent of orders were telephoned and most were delivered within

two to three days. The last parcels for Christmas will be dispatched today. "We are amused by the current Sunday trading debate," says Mr Hawker. "We are open 24 hours a day, seven days a week."

Mr Hawker said Freemans, the fourth largest mail order group, has lifted its market share to 14.7 per cent and has taken business from Gratian.

"There are obvious economies of scale but Freemans has grown very successfully on its own so far. The Gratian issue is secondary," he said. But while Freemans may be

bucking the trend, Sears is a whole is not.

Paul Morris, a retail analyst at Goldman Sachs, has published a bearish note on the group in which he says the present Sears rating looks optimistic given its past record and modest recovery prospects. Mr Morris is forecasting pre-tax profits of £110 million for the year to January, down from £183.5 million last year. But he expects the home shopping division to contribute £30 million at the operating level, up from £26.6 million,

Flag hauled down at Ensign Trust

By NEIL BENNETT

BANKING CORRESPONDENT

AFTER five years of swashbuckling investment management, Ensign Trust has been scuttled by its owners. The company has been dismissed as investment manager of the Merchant Navy Officers' Pension Fund, the controlling shareholder, and ordered to wind it up within five years.

The pension fund is terminating its management contract with Argosy Asset Management, Ensign's management subsidiary, at the end of March, and will hold a beauty parade for new managers to look after its £1.5 billion fund.

This will remove the largest part of Ensign's business. Apart from the Merchant Navy Officers' Fund, Argosy manages only £500 million, which mainly belongs to the company or

offer. Ensign has been forced to write off the stake.

"It was not even as if the value of the stake declined," said Mr Ashmore. "One day there was £11.6 million and the next there was nothing."

The Merchant Navy Officers' Fund has said it is ready to sell the £260 million stake in Ensign, but the fund thinks it is unlikely that it will receive an offer. Instead the trust is being given five years to sell off its portfolio and pay off investors. Ensign, whose shares have been trading at a heavy discount to asset value, rose 10p to 53p yesterday as hopes rose that the company could unlock its assets.

The news was announced at Ensign's annual meeting. John Gillum, a non-executive director, demanded the Merchant Navy Officers' Fund make a full offer to minority shareholders. "It is entirely wrong the trustees have

discredited these investment managers publicly. If they had ample scope to initiate whatever was needed," he said later.

Geoffrey Musson, Argosy's managing director, said the move had fallen on the company "like a bombshell". He gave a warning to other investment managers of the consequences of doing business with big pension funds. He said: "If you are in bed with an elephant and it rolls over in the night, what is going to happen to you?"

Mr Ashmore said the trustees needed to look after their 60,000 pensioners properly. "We have negative cashflow. We simply do not have the money to support some of the long-term projects of Ensign's. Some of the funds have come through very well. But not lately. Perhaps ideas are running out."

The news was announced at Ensign's annual meeting. John Gillum, a non-executive director, demanded the Merchant Navy Officers' Fund make a full offer to minority shareholders. "It is entirely wrong the trustees have

discredited these investment managers publicly. If they had ample scope to initiate whatever was needed," he said later.

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Elf deal with Amoco is referred

By ROSS TEAGUE

INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT

PETER Lilley, the trade secretary, has referred the purchase of Amoco's United Kingdom petrol refining and marketing operations by Elf Aquitaine of France to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission.

The reference is the fifth takeover of British assets by a foreign state-controlled company to be examined by the commission under a policy instituted by Nicholas Ridley, Mr Lilley's forerunner, in July. It is the fourth involving a French company.

In making the reference, Mr Lilley rejected the advice of Sir Gordon Borrie, director-general of fair trading.

Mr Lilley said the ability of the French government to influence Elf and Total Comptoir Francaise de Petroles, which also competes in Britain, "raised issues of public interest which warranted investigation".

Under the deal, completed in August, Elf bought Amoco's 70 per cent stake in a 100,000-barrel-a-day refinery and terminal at Milford Haven, Pembrokeshire, and pipelines to Kingsbury, Warwickshire and Cadishead, Manchester.

Elf also acquired 200 Amoco service stations, doubling the number of its British outlets and giving it a 4.2 per cent share of the market. The disposal completed Amoco's withdrawal from petrol refining and marketing outside North America. The price has not been disclosed.

A spokesman for Elf in Paris declined to comment. Official notification of the decision had not been received. Amoco was seeking reaction from its US parent.

Elf is 55 per cent owned by the French government. The rest of its shares are in private hands. The French government also has a 35 per cent holding in Total.

In July, Mr Ridley said he would in future be paying particular attention to the degree of state control over acquiring companies when deciding whether to refer deals to the MMC.

For small demerger deals only by the P.C. Different rates apply to transfers.

Retail Price Index 130.0 (November)

£46.2 million in 1989, from 30.1p a share, negligible acceptances rising to 25p to 30p. The bid was to offer 10% in construction, 10% in infrastructure, to concentrate on surgical businesses. The bid was to pay a special dividend and to use the main disposals to buy in our shares.

Shaftesbury continues sector trend with losses

By MATTHEW BOND

SHAFTESBURY Group, which specialises in West End property, has reported pre-tax losses of £5.5 million after writing down the value of some development properties by £4.3 million. No final dividend is to be paid (1.5p).

Shaftesbury's losses come at the end of a week that has shown clearly how hard the commercial property market is being affected by high interest rates and the imbalance of supply and demand. City Size Estates, Cabra and Zurich have all reported significant losses, while profits at Dwyer were sharply reduced.

Net asset values have also been falling. Shaftesbury followed the trend, with net assets per share dropping from 284p to 222p, a fall of 22% per cent. The shares fell 18p to 100p.

The losses for the year to end-September compare with pre-tax profits of £5 million last year. The interest bill almost trebled, rising from £1.2 million to £4.4 million. The results were also hit by £2.5 million of losses from associates. In 1989, Shaftesbury's associate companies, where partners include Dares Estates and Ford Stellar Morris, contributed £894,000 to profits.

Peter Levy, chairman, said the company had largely completed its development programme. "Our investment portfolio will continue to benefit from our policy of active management and we expect further increases in rental income from rent reviews and lease renewals."

Manpower suffers 8% drop

By COLIN CAMPBELL

MANPOWER, the Milwaukee employment agency group, reported after-tax profits for the year to end-October falling by 8.3 per cent from \$65.8 million to \$60.3 million, on revenues 11.5 per cent higher at \$3.04 billion.

The figures exclude goodwill amortisation, certain exchange losses and the effect of gains or losses on the sale and closure of businesses. The group is changing its year-end from October to December.

The American side of Manpower advanced in the last three months of the reporting period, and also over the 12-month period, but the world markets for the firm's temporary help services are now showing signs of economic weakness.

In November, the group's planned sale of five British agency chains was called off after fund-raising difficulties associated with the leveraged buyout. The agency sale of non-core British businesses would have severed Manpower's unhappy connection with Blue Arrow.

Halfway loss at Platignum

By OUR CITY STAFF

PLATIGNUM, the pen and furniture group, has reversed last year's interim £209,000 profit, with a £331,000 pre-tax loss for the six months to end-September.

The company made a small trading profit but was hit by a £200,000 interest charge and a £173,000 exceptional redundancy and rationalisation cost. There will be no interim dividend on ordinary or preference shares.

Stanley Cohen and Simon Knot, joint chairmen, said the company had encountered reduced demand in most areas, particularly for its consumer products. Turnover fell from £11.2 million to £10 million.

Mr Cohen and Mr Knot said cost reduction and other rationalisation measures would lead to an improved trading performance.

Ensor profits drop to £331,000 at half time

By PHILIP PANGALOS

WEAKER market conditions, particularly in the building sector, took their toll on profits at Ensor Holdings, the USM-quoted vehicle distribution and building products group.

The company suffered a slump in pre-tax profits from £377,000 to £331,000 in the six months to end-September, as turnover declined from £29.6 million to £26.1 million.

Brian Morgan, chairman, said the recession had a marked effect on the manufacturing and distribution divisions, reducing turnover and eroding margins. Profits at the distribution division fell from

WPP Group shares plunge as interim payout is cancelled

By MARTIN WALLER

WPP GROUP, the debt-stricken advertising agency, has withdrawn its interim dividend payment, announced in August, and is holding talks with its bankers over restructuring its debts.

The shares fell almost 20p in early trading before the news but ended 11p lower at 50p. A 13.7p interim dividend announced in August had been due on January 2, but at a board meeting on Thursday, the decision was taken to defer the payment.

Martin Sorrell, the chief executive, would not comment on the circumstances surrounding the dropped payment. But it was a move that met with the approval of WPP's banks, to which it owes an estimated £50 million.

The dropped dividend will save WPP about £8 million.

The company has until April to decide whether to pay another £12 million as dividends on its preference shares, but the market expects this payment to be passed.

Tom Donaldson, a managing director of JP Morgan, which is representing the banks, said WPP's move was "a very responsible and very difficult decision made at the right time". Talks with the banks will continue into the new year, and he was "as confident as one reasonably can be" of a successful outcome.

"The company never asked the banks for approval, and there was no question of the banks either approving or disapproving," he said.

But the banks are thought to have prompted the dropped payment as part of continuing discussions with the group, which has seen a catastrophic collapse in its share price since the summer. The shares, which traded at more than £7 earlier in the year, were just under £4 last month, when WPP announced that profits for calendar 1990 would not match market estimates of £100 million.

"I think the banks were behind it in suggesting it, but it had to be ultimately a board decision," said Neil Blackley, analyst at James Capel.

Market estimates are now for £90 million pre-tax, so if both dividends are dropped the money saved will be sufficient to make up the difference.

WPP has yet to draw up its budgets for 1991, but the outlook is gloomy, given that analysts and commentators expect the adverse conditions over the last months of this year to continue into next, said David Ogilvy, the chairman, in a letter spelling out the latest news to shareholders.

The long and winding road: Martin Sorrell in New York. WPP is talking to banks over restructuring group debts

ers. "It may therefore be some time before the group can resume the pattern of growth in profits and earnings experienced up until a few months ago."

WPP says it is not in breach of its banking covenants, which are thought to require interest payments to be covered about 2.3 times by 1990's profits. But the loss of cash flow because of the difficult state of advertising markets has meant WPP is unlikely to see borrowings fall as fast as it had promised the banks, and next year's cover

target, believed to be about 2.8 times, could therefore be at risk.

Analysts' forecasts for next year, in the absence of any guidance on 1991 budgets from the company, range from £65 million to £90 million pre-tax. The agency's team at Warburg Securities, for example, is forecasting £77 million.

WPP has come under pressure to make disposals but is known to be keen to keep the group together. It is prepared to sell a small agency, Scalz McCabe Sloves, but this is unlikely to make much of a

dent in its debt mountain. Mr Ogilvy said the "major banks" had reaffirmed their support for WPP, and he was confident that suitable arrangements would be successfully concluded in the near future.

But although the group was achieving "satisfactory profits" in the present adverse economic climate, "our cash flow is now below our projections of a few months ago. As a result, a major priority is to conserve cash". A dividend payment was therefore not in the company's best interests.

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WEEKEND MONEY

THE TIMES SATURDAY DECEMBER 22 1990

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SUMMARY

Court bans boycott by brokers

SIR Gordon Borrie, the director general of the Office of Fair Trading, has won an interim injunction in the Restrictive Trade Practices Court preventing brokers from boycotting General Accident, the insurance company, from January 1.

Mr Justice Warner decided the boycott planned by the Institute of Insurance Brokers was not in the public interest. The court has given the Institute until December 31 to withdraw the boycott. Treasury solicitors will write to all 850 members telling them of the ruling.

The brokers are angry that General Accident provided insurance via Ford, the motor company, for 80,000 buyers of new Escorts, Orions and Fiestas. The free insurance policies guaranteed a full no claims bonus at the end of the year for all the drivers.

General Accident accounts for 8 per cent of the motor insurance market. About 1 per cent of its business comes from institute members.

Stress factor



Sir Allen Shepherd, chairman and chief executive of Grand Metropolitan, was a long serving Labour party member, but does not run his company in a political way despite rowdy board meetings. He tells Carol Leonard that the good humour of these meetings relieves stress..... Page 35

Watchdog alert

Financial watchdogs in London and Brussels have issued a warning against dealing with European Classic Car Investments, a company soliciting funds to invest in classic cars. The British-run firm sends glossy literature to potential investors in the UK claiming annual compound returns of 35 per cent over the last ten years..... Page 34

Tessa time

Companies are busy launching tax exempt special savings accounts (Tessas) in time for the launch on January 1. Nationwide, NatWest, Woolwich, Midland, and Bradford and Bingley have shown their hands..... Page 34

Bonus gloom

There will be no bonus rate bonanza this year as life offices feel the weight of the year's market slump. There could be cuts on shorter term policies and payouts made up largely of terminal bonus rates could also suffer..... Page 33

Bond payout

National Savings is paying out £300,000 to 16,600 holders of premium bond and index linked savings certificates in the next few weeks. Premium bond holders missed out because National Savings put ineligible repaid bonds in draws nine times since 1975..... Page 33

Power stags

The stags have been slow off the mark to sell electricity shares. Allocations were too low for most people to make much profit even with free dealing services..... Page 33

THE SUNDAY TIMES

Car wars

Carl Hahn of Volkswagen and Gianni Agnelli of Fiat – two car chiefs who could scarcely be more different. Now they are launching an assault on the east European car market that could decide the leadership of the European industry. *Business – The Sunday Times tomorrow*

Plastic has parcels covered

By SARA MCCONNELL

A FEW days' delay in receiving Christmas presents sent through the post is a fact of life at this time of year, but the senders of some parcels bought by credit card will be able to claim on the insurance offered with their plastic if a present fails to arrive.

Barclaycard is expecting a surge in calls after Christmas from customers claiming on the card's Purchase Cover insurance. The deal, introduced in May, provides automatic cover against theft, damage or loss for any item bought with a Barclaycard worth between £50 and £15,000 as long as the card holder returns a claim form within 45 days.

A spokeswoman confirmed that Christmas presents bought with a Barclaycard and put in the post would be covered and that customers would not need to have a registered mail receipt to prove the parcel had been sent. Customers have to produce the sales voucher to prove they bought the present with the card.

A Prudential spokesman said: "Parcels in the post are not covered by our home contents

policies. We don't cater for that eventuality and we advise people to use registered post."

American Express's Purchase Protection plan covers items up to £20,000 bought with an American Express card and reported lost, accidentally damaged or stolen within 90 days. But an Amex spokeswoman said card holders claiming for parcels lost in the post must take "due care", which means sending it recorded delivery or registered mail. If parcels are lost, customers should claim on the Post Office's own insurance before claiming from Amex.

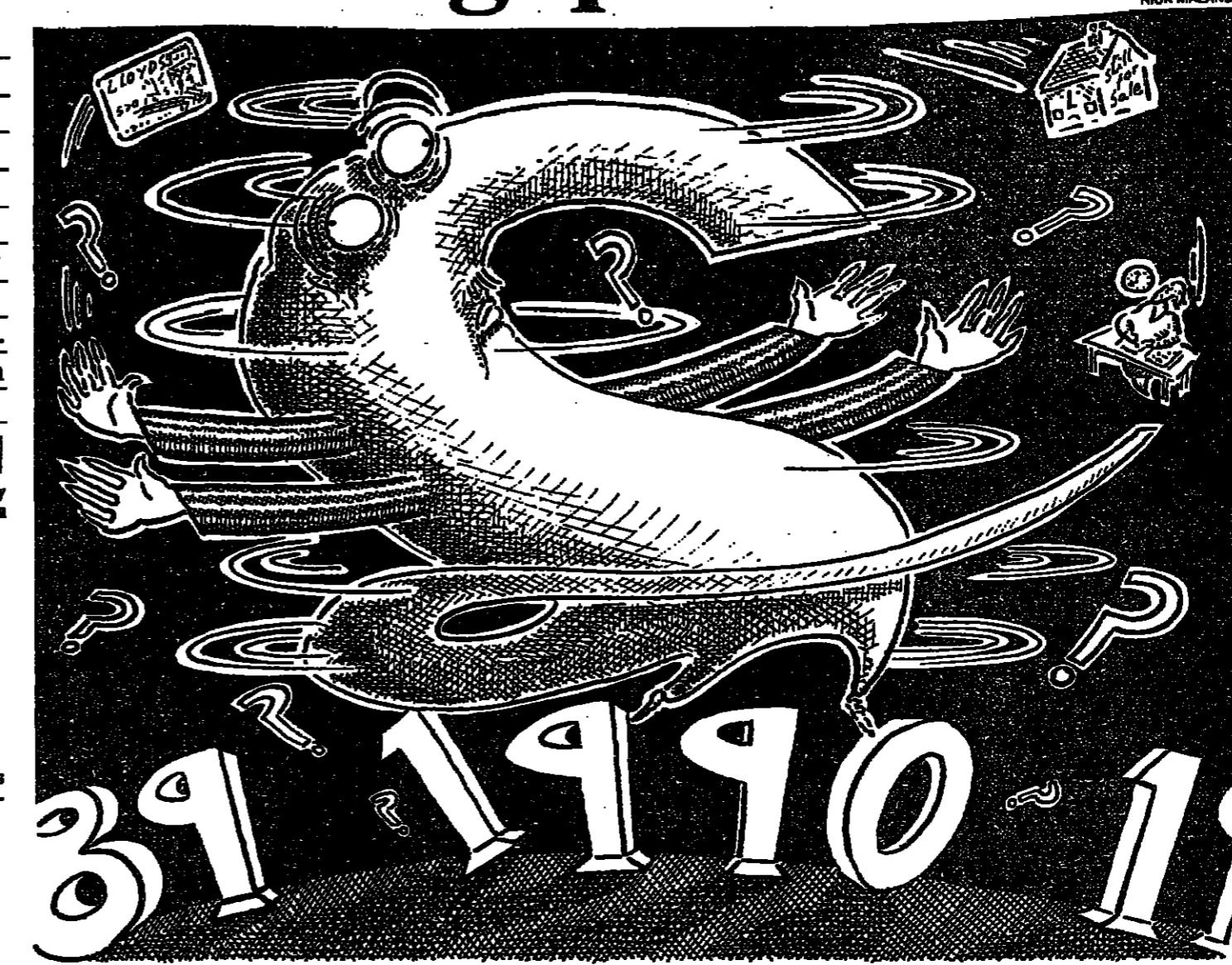
She said: "Purchase protection is a safety net and people need to make sure they are not covered elsewhere. Some people may be covered on their contents insurance."

However, householders need to look carefully at the small print on their policies because most will not cover parcels in transit through the mail.

A Prudential spokesman said:

"Parcels in the post are not covered by our home contents

insurance will have to produce a certificate of posting."



1. Why did 600,000 holders of Lloyds Bank Access cards send back their cards in the first few weeks of 1990?
2. A printing error meant the cards were invalid.
3. Lloyds became the first major card issuer to levy an annual fee on its credit card of £12.

4. When Barclays introduced an annual charge in June, how long did it give people to cancel their card and get their money back?
5. a) 56 days; b) the same as the maximum interest-free period with a Barclaycard when the full bill is paid off each month.
6. b) 14 days from the arrival of the notice.
7. c) One year, by which time the bank hopes the other main card issuers will have introduced a charge.

8. In June, Weekend Money reported on the case of a dentist who tried to cancel his wife's credit and charge cards. What happened?
9. a) She cut up his cards first.
10. b) After a four-year battle he was ordered in the High Court to pay an £8,000 bill run up on her American Express card.
11. c) A sales assistant confiscated her card when she next went shopping.

12. Why did the Halifax write to the parents of 1.25 million children in December?
13. a) To ask them to increase their children's pocket money so that youngsters could save more.
14. b) To find out what the children wanted for Christmas this year.
15. c) To remind parents that most children are non-taxpayers and should be registered as such with building societies and banks so that they can earn interest gross on their savings accounts when CRT is scrapped.

16. Why did the Data Protection Registrar serve enforcement notices on the four main credit reference agencies in August?
17. a) Because they were refusing to pass on information about people who applied for credit.
18. b) Because they were supplying information on other people in the household when a person applied for credit.
19. c) The agencies were not supplying information to the registrar.

20. a) The pleasure of paying more tax.
21. b) The need for non-taxpayers to register for gross payment of interest.
22. c) That Inland Revenue snoops are looking for people who are working and not declaring tax.

MORTGAGES

1. What was the historically high base mortgage rate set in February?

2. a) 15.4 per cent.
3. b) 14.5 per cent.
4. c) 17 per cent.

5. Why do more than three million home buyers face mortgage payment rises in 1991 despite the November mortgage rate cut?

6. a) They are six months or more in arrears with their mortgages.
7. b) Their loans are operated under an annual review scheme, which means they did not have their payments increased in the spring and now have to

8. c) To remind parents that most children are non-taxpayers and should be registered as such with building societies and banks so that they can earn interest gross on their savings accounts when CRT is scrapped.

PENSIONS

1. What concessions were granted to home buyers in the 1990 Budget?

2. a) Stamp duty was scrapped.
3. b) A £60,000 threshold was introduced for stamp duty.
4. c) None.

TAXATION

1. Why might a teacher's perk lead to other workers paying more tax?

2. a) The Court of Appeal in November backed the Inland Revenue in a case against Merton College Teachers. It ruled that employees must pay tax on the average cost of benefits.

3. b) The Inland Revenue ruled that apples given to teachers by pupils were tips and should be declared for tax.

4. c) Employees who have six weeks or more holiday in the summer could face higher National Insurance contributions.

INVESTMENT

1. How many people applied for shares in the 12 electricity companies?

2. a) 12.75 million.

3. b) 5.7 million.

4. c) 2.5 million.

INVESTMENT

1. How much of a personal equity plan can be invested in unit trusts?

2. a) £3,000.

3. b) £6,000.

4. c) £2,400.

INVESTMENT

1. Why can the public expect more unsolicited telephone calls from investment salesmen?

2. a) Because times are hard and they are finding it hard to sell their products.

3. b) BT is offering cheaper calls to telephone salesmen.

4. c) The Securities and Investments Board proposes to allow salesmen to sell investment trust savings schemes and personal equity plans by cold calling next year.

HOW CAN YOU AFFORD TO STOP WORKING AND LIVE COMFORTABLY FOR THE REST OF YOUR LIFE?

To improve your chances of doing just that, you need financial advice that's independent.

An independent financial adviser can help you by making recommendations from the whole marketplace that suit you specifically.

But first, he or she will get to know you.

The advice they'll then offer will be personal to you. Since it will also be impartial, it will be well worth listening to. And your initial consultation could well be free.

To help you find the right adviser for you, we've put together a booklet about the benefits of advice that's independent, a checklist of things to look out for when choosing an adviser and a list of independent financial advisers near you.

To get your information pack about financial advice that's independent, phone 081-200 3000 today, or complete and send the coupon below.

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Please send me a list of ten independent financial advisers, convenient to my home or work address, below.

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